

Oration "Audiui" given by Enea Silvio Piccolomini on 18 October 1436, Basel

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Oration “Audivi” given by Enea Silvio Piccolomini on 18 October 1436, Basel. Edition, translation, introduction and notes by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg

**Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini (Pius II), 1
4th ed.**

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Abstract

This publication contains the Latin text and English translation of Enea Silvio Piccolomini's oration *Audivi* to the Council of Basel on May 15, 1436, concerning the choice of venue for the reunion Council between the Latin Church and the Greek Church. The speaker argued for the city of Pavia in the territory of the Duke of Milan. The oration reflected the tensions between conciliarism and the papacy, between the European countries, and between the Italian powers including the Papal State. Piccolomini used the occasion to demonstrate his rhetorical skills and humanist learning to the Council fathers. In addition to the main subject, the oration touches upon issues that are also of interest in other contexts, e.g. the humanist debate on the origins of the Turks.

Keywords: Enea Silvio Piccolomini; Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini; Æneas Silvius Piccolomini; Pope Pius II; Pope Eugene IV; Pope Eugenius IV; Duke Filippo Maria Visconti; Duke Philip Mary Visconti; Milan; Venice; Genoa; The Papacy; The Papal States; Conciliarism; The Council of Basel; The Council of Basel; Pavia; The Renaissance; Italian humanism; France; King Charles VII; origin of the Turks

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I. Introduction²

² For a general introduction to the orations of Piccolomini, see: Michael von Cotta-Schönberg: *A brief introduction to the orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini*, to be published in 2014 on the web

1. Europe in 1436³

In 1436, Europe was in its usual state of turmoil.

The Holy Roman Empire covering Central Europe and Northern Italy was governed by the Emperor Sigismund, but the reign of the emperor was approaching its end. He had at long last been crowned emperor by the Pope in 1433, but the coronation would not be of great benefit to him as he died in 1437, and the imperial crown passed from his family, the Luxembourgs, to the Habsburg family of his son-in-law, Albrecht V. He had been King of Hungary from 1387 and King of Bohemia from 1419, but the Bohemians did not recognize him as King until 1436 when the Council of Basel accepted a number of crucial demands put forward by the Hussites (the Hussite Compacts).

The German states were engaged in local conflicts, and the central, imperial authority was fast approaching its nadir. Brandenburg and Saxony were emerging as strong regional powers, but Princely rule everywhere was under continuous pressure from the estates and the towns.

In France, the disunity of the French Princes and magnates combined with English aggression had led to the collapse of the French monarchy. The Treaty of Troyes from 1420 recognized the English King, Henry V., as heir to the King of France. The Dauphin, Charles, was declared illegitimate, and an English regime was installed in Paris and large parts of Northern and Western France. The situation was completely reversed through the remarkable – some would say miraculous – intervention of Joan of Arc. After a series of successful military campaigns, Charles VII. was crowned in the Cathedral of Reims in 1429, and a slow process of restoration of the French monarchy and central power began. An important milestone in this process was the Treaty of Arras in 1435, through which the Duke of Burgundy abandoned his alliance with the English and was reconciled with the court of France. Enea Silvio Piccolomini actually participated in the congress as a secretary to the papal legate, Cardinal Albergati, who played a decisive role.

On the Iberian Peninsula, the process of *reconquista* was under way, and the Spanish Kings gradually succeeded in conquering the Moorish states in the South.

³ This short overview is based on Holmes, pp. 129-238

Dynastic consolidation between the houses of Aragon and Castile was progressing, and the King of Aragon and Sicily had initiated his military campaign to join the Kingdom of Naples to his realms.

In England, King Henry VI, who was peaceful, but intermittently insane, had not yet attained his majority, and the Kingdom was ruled by regents. Political discord was widespread, and the rivalry between the Houses of Lancaster and York would eventually lead to the War of the Roses.

In Scandinavia, the Calmar Union between Denmark, Norway and Sweden was on the brink of collapse: the autocratic rule of the union monarch, Eric of Pomerania, had unleashed significant oppositional forces, and following a revolt in Sweden the form of the union was revised in 1436, and the powers of the monarch curtailed. Eric, however, would not accept his more restricted role and very soon went into voluntary exile on the island of Gotland. The Council of Basel actually became involved in the matter through letters complaining against the King sent by the Swedish bishops.

Italy was being torn apart by the major powers in the peninsula: the Kingdom of Naples in the South, the Church State in the middle, and Florence, Milan, Venice (and to some extent Genoa) in the North. The Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria Visconti, had succeeded in restoring the Visconti dominance over the Lombard region and pursued his father's expansionist policies. In response, Venice and Florence allied themselves against Milan. Pope Eugene IV., who had succeeded Martin V. in 1431 and who was himself a Venetian, joined the alliance as a defensive measure against the depredations by Milan in the Church State. At the same time, he became involved in the conflict between the French House of Anjou and the Spanish House of Aragon over the Kingdom of Naples. The Pope sided with the French thereby incurring the enmity of the Aragonese. In 1434, the Roman population rose up against Pope Eugene who had to flee and sought refuge in Florence. Later, from April 1436, he resided in Bologna, and he did not return to Rome until almost 10 years later.

2. Papacy and conciliarism⁴

From its medieval zenith the papacy had reached its nadir by the beginning of the 15th century. The long period in Avignon – from 1309 to 1376 - had weakened the international status of the papacy and made it appear subservient to French interests. The Great Schism followed, initially with two rival popes and subsequently with three.

The Council of Constance (1414-1418) was organized by the uncrowned Emperor Sigismund. It deposed all three popes and elected a new one, the Roman aristocrat, Cardinal Odo Colonna, who took the name of Martin V.

The Council did not succeed in carrying out a genuine reform of the Church – this was left to the Popes and to future councils, but it did pass two important decrees, *Sacrosancta* and *Frequens*.

The decree *Sacrosancta* of April 6, 1415, was the culmination of conciliarism, a movement that did not acknowledge the supreme authority of the popes, but maintained that an ecumenical council was supreme in matters of faith, schism and general reform of the Church - and had the power to depose a heretical or otherwise unsuitable pope. In reality, *Sacrosancta* was meant as a mortal blow against the monarchic constitution of the Roman Church, and it was not recognized by succeeding popes.

The decree *Frequens* of October 9, 1417 pursued the ideas behind *Sacrosancta* and ordained that ecumenical councils should be held at regular intervals, initially two councils at five year intervals, and then councils every ten years. Had this decree been carried out, it would have meant that the pope had been reduced to an executive figurehead, while the real power in the Church would have been held by the councils.

An initial council was actually held in Pavia-Siena in 1423-1424, but it had so few participants that it was quickly – and with great relief - dissolved by the Pope, Martin V. The next council was the Council of Basel.

⁴ cf. the Introduction in Piccolomini: *De Gestis*

The Pope elected by the Council in Constance, Martin V., was highly successful in restoring the temporal status of the papacy and its control over the papal dominion. A skilled diplomat, he managed to stay free – and above – the territorial conflicts of the Italian states. He also maintained friendly relations with the Duchy of Milan that was recovering after the serious setbacks following the death of Duke Filippo Maria's father, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, in 1402, and the unhappy reign of his brother, Gian Maria, who died in 1412.

The successor of Martin V., Pope Eugene IV., came, as already indicated, from Venice. It may therefore have been natural for him to ally himself with Venice and Florence against the expansionist Milanese state. This earned him the enmity of the cunning and devious Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria Visconti, who countered the Venice-Florence-Papacy alliance in two ways: first by promoting the Council in Basel, as a counterweight to the Pope, and secondly by allying himself with the Aragonese pretender to the throne of Naples, Alfonso V the Magnanimous⁵, in 1435. Thus the Council acquired two powerful Princes as protectors and defenders against the Pope.

From the beginning, the Council also enjoyed the support of Emperor Sigismund, but after he allied himself with the Pope in order to get his imperial coronation in Rome, he adopted a more cautious stance and endeavoured to restrain the Council's actions directed against the Pope.

⁵ Gill, p. 87

3. The Council of Basel⁶

The Council of Basel opened in 1431. The presidency was soon assumed by the representative of the Pope, Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini. Cesarini was torn between his loyalties towards the Pope and the Council, but as the Council became more and more anti-papalist, he finally left it to join the Pope.

Very few participants had come to Basel for the opening of the Council, and the Pope soon tried to repeat the Pavia-Siena procedure by dissolving it. However, the Council fathers stood firm, they gained the support of the Emperor and the Princes, and in August 1433 the Pope was forced to recognize the Council in the bull *Dudum sacrum*⁷.

The Council was not organized on the basis of nations as the Council of Constance had been. Still, the main party at the Council was the French contingent that eventually came to dominate it completely. The two other parties were the papal party, which gradually left the Council, and the undecided, including the Germans.

In his bull of appointment of the papal President of the Council, Martin V. had listed five major aims: 1) to deal with the Hussite heresy; 2) to establish peace in Europe; 3) to reform the Church; 4) to reunite the Latin and the Greek churches, and 5) to preserve ecclesiastical independence (of secular power).⁸

The Hussite problem was solved by the Hussite Compacts in early 1436. The war between Burgundy, France, and England was more or less laid to rest at the abovementioned Congress of Arras in 1435. As for the reform of the Church, some decrees were passed, e.g. against concubinage of priests, but the efforts of the Council in this area were mainly directed against the papacy. In June 1435, the Council passed a decree depriving the popes of a considerable part of their revenue in the form of annates, but without assigning other forms of revenue to them.

⁶ cf. The introduction in Piccolomini: *De Gestis*

⁷ Gill, p. 53

⁸ Stieber, p. 10

As for the reunion with the Greek Church, the Council very much wanted the honour of effecting this reunion, and so did the Pope. The first major issue and a fresh cause for conflict between Pope and Council was the venue for the reunion Council. The Pope wanted to transfer the Council from Basel to an Italian city so as to better be able to direct and control it. The Council itself naturally disagreed, and on September 9, 1434, it passed a decree, *Sicut pia mater*, that the Reunion Council should take place in a suitable city in Italy, or in Buda, Vienna, or a city in Savoy. The Greeks wanted the Council to take place in Italy that was closer to them, and they also preferred it to take place under the effective presidency of the Pope.

Discussions of the venue for the Council continued in 1436 and 1437. Finally, in May 1437 the French-dominated majority at the Council decided that it should take place in Avignon. This caused the papal party to leave, a severe loss of prestige for the Council, and the beginning of its gradual decline. Later, in 1439, it managed to elect an anti-pope, the Duke of Savoy, under the name of Felix V., and it lingered on, condemned by the Pope and unrecognized by most European powers, until it finally dissolved itself in 1449.

The battle of the venue for the Council was won by the Pope who succeeded in organizing a “papal” Reunion Council. It opened in Ferrara in 1438 and was later transferred to Florence. Among its participants were the Greek Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople. A reunion of the Latin and Greek Churches was actually effected, and, although it was short-lived, it lent great prestige to the papacy and was a determining factor in its remarkable reconsolidation during the Renaissance.

4. The oration *Audivi*

The oration *Audivi* is the earliest extant speech of Piccolomini⁹.

⁹ In a letter of February 27, 1436, Francesco Filelfo wrote to Piccolomini that he had read carefully two orations of Piccolomini against the Pope: “*tuas autem duas orationes in Eugenium pontificem lectitavi quam accuratissime*”, cf. Piccolomini: *Der Briefwechsel*, I/1, 40-41 (ep. 19). In his *Commentarii*, Piccolomini as Pius II does not refer to these two speeches, but only to the *Audivi*. Simone Iaria seems to believe that the *Audivi* might have been one of the two orations mentioned by Filelfo and gives the date of Filelfo’s letter as June 1436, cf. Iaria, p. 6

It was given by Piccolomini at a general session of the Council in 1436¹⁰, see below.

Later, in 1450, Piccolomini in his *Revised History of the Council* wrote about the speech: *Since we bore sorely the injury to the Duke whom we saw disdained because of this¹¹, although we had little eloquence, we wished to make up for the negligence of the man and honor so great a Duke. Rising, therefore, in his place a few days later, we delivered an oration in praise of Pavia and the Duke of Milan which was heard for two hours without any annoyance, without inflicting injury on anyone.*¹²

And still later in his life, as Pius II, he wrote about the speech in his *Commentaries*: *At the time, there was some discussion of transferring the Council to a place where the Greeks would come for a conference. The choice fell between four cities willing to pay the expenses of the Greeks: Florence, Udine, Pavia and Avignon. Eloquent speeches in praise of these cities resounded through the great hall; only Pavia had no one to plead its cause, because Isidoro Rosati, whom the Duke Filippo Maria of Milan had sent for that purpose, had spoken so badly and stupidly that he had been told to hold his tongue. Aeneas was moved by the humiliation of this noble city and its Prince, and that very night he composed a speech. Next day he went into the Council, where Giuliano, the Papal Legate, used his influence to get him permission to speak. For two hours he declaimed before a most attentive and admiring audience. Afterwards, everyone who had heard his speech had a copy made for himself.*¹³

Note that in 1450 he wrote “a few days later” and ten years after the “next day”.

One of Piccolomini’s contemporary biographers, Giannantonio Campano, Bishop of Teramo, a protégé of Piccolomini after he became Pope, wrote about the speech in his *Vita Pii II Pontificis Maximi*: *In Basel ... he tried in vain to persuade the Fathers to transfer the Council to Pavia, since the Italians preferred Florence, the Germans Udine, and the French Avignon.*¹⁴

¹⁰ Cf. Helmroth: *Reichstagsreden*, p. 141

¹¹ I.e. by an inept speech of Isidoro da Rosate

¹² Pius II: *Revised*, p. 349

¹³ Pius II: *Commentaries*, p. 32-33

¹⁴ Campano: *Vita*, p. 11: *Basileae ... concilium ut Papiam traduceretur frustra suasit, Italis Florentiam, Germanis Utinum, Gallis Avinionem praeferentibus.*

The oration is also mentioned by Bartolomeo Platina, another of Pius' contemporary who wrote as follows in his biography of the Pope: *He often spoke in the Council, but one speech is considered to have been especially good and elegant, i.e. the speech concerning the choice of venue for the future Council. In this speech, he showed that Pavia (once called Ticinum) should be preferred to Avignon, Udine, and Florence because of the circumstances, its convenience and location, the magnificence of the private houses, the pleasant and mild climate, the ease of importing everything needed by a city, Duke Philip's generosity, the proximity of the river Ticino that provides for easy transportation of provisions. I will not deny that he improvised this oration when he was ordered to speak in place of the man who had been sent by Philip and who was heard to be speaking confusedly and ineptly and who had no knowledge of the liberal arts.*¹⁵

Georg Voigt, Piccolomini's first – and not very sympathetic – biographer, said about the speech: *Die Rede, die Enea nun vor dem Concil hielt, ist uns als das erste von ihm ausgehende Zeugnis seiner Fähigkeit und Gewandtheit wichtig.*¹⁶ And later: *Wer sich an alle Parteien wendet, wird seiner Sache keinem Freund, aber auch seiner Person keinen Feind erwerben. An der Wahl von Pavia lag dem Redner weniger als an der Gunst des Herzogs, für den er sich aus freien Stücken verwendet, und an der hohen Meinung, die nach einer glänzenden und jedem schmeichelnden Rede alle Väter von ihm fassten.*¹⁷

In his biography of Piccolomini from 1908, William Boultong writes about the speech that Piccolomini's cause, indeed, was hopeless. *The French would never consent to give up; the Venetians and Florentines, who belonged to the Papal party were foes of the Duke, and were still less likely to do so ... But it was a great opportunity. He was to appear before the assembled representatives of Europe, and could make his force felt by the most important audience conceivable.*¹⁸

¹⁵ Platine: Vita, p. 98: *In conventu persaepe oravit, set illa eius oratio egregia et elegans est habita, quam in eligenda concilii sede Avenioni, Utini et Florentiae Papiam, quae olim Ticinum dicebatur, antefendam ostendit rerum opportunitate, situ loci, aedium privatarum magnificentia, celi benignitate et clementia, commoditate rerum omnium que urbi possunt importari, liberalitate Philipp ducis, vicinitate fluminis Ticinij quo facillime commeatus subvehuntur. Nec abnuerim eam orationem ex tempore habitam, cum eius vices subire sit iussus, qui a Philippo missus ignoratione bonarum litterarum perturbate et inepte omnia dicere videbatur.*

¹⁶ Voigt, p. 117

¹⁷ Voigt, p. 119

¹⁸ Boultong, p. 78

Cecilia Ady, in her biography of 1913, comments that the speech was *chiefly remarkable for the zeal with which Æneas set himself to gratify every shade of opinion in turn; but the careful attention to style at once proclaims the author as a disciple of humanism, and the rounded periods of his rhetoric came as a pleasant change from the less polished utterances to which the fathers were wont to listen.*¹⁹

Johannes Helmrath lists the oration as the earliest surviving oration of Piccolomini and points out that here Piccolomini actually outlines his own life-long program of war against the Turks whose mighty Empire can only be fought by a united Europe (Christianity).²⁰

4.1. The rhetorical genre

From Quintilian and Cicero, Piccolomini knew about the classical, Aristotelian division of speeches into three genres: the panegyric, the deliberative and the judicial.²¹

The *Audivi* clearly belongs to the deliberative genre as it deals with the important choice to be made by the Council Fathers of the venue for the future reunion Council.

It also contains strong elements of panegyric in relation to the Duke of Milan and the royal house of France, King Charles VII. and King Alfonso of Aragon.²²

4.2. The aims of the speech

In his speech, Piccolomini pursued at least four objectives:

- To promote an Italian venue for the Council
- To win the favour of the Duke of Milan
- To gain favour with the Council Fathers, and

¹⁹ Ady, p. 58

²⁰ Helmrath: *Pius*, p. 89

²¹ Cicero, *De inv.* I, (7); Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* III, 3, 13

²² On Piccolomini's speechmaking and rhetorics in general, see Voigt, III, 271-276

- To exercise and demonstrate his humanist, rhetorical, and persuasive skills.

4.2.1 To promote an Italian venue for the Council

The first aim of the speech was to promote an Italian venue for the Council as the Council of reunion with the Greek Church.

As we have seen, the Council itself had already, in the decree *Sicut pia mater* of 1434, pointed to a number of cities, but the matter was still under free discussion, and the Council had during the previous days heard arguments in favour of various Italian cities.

The implications of the choice of venue for the Council were clear to all: an Italian city meant greater papal influence on the Council, whereas a German or French city meant greater conciliarist influence and greater influence for the transalpine Princes, among them the King of France.

Piccolomini was inveterately pro-Italian and just as inveterately anti-French. The Germans he considered barbarians. So, he naturally wanted the Reunion Council to take place in Italy. On the other hand, since he was at the time on the anti-papal side, he did not want the Council to go to a city in the papal domains.

An Italian city in the territory of the Pope's great enemy, the Duke of Milan, was therefore – to Piccolomini – a perfectly logical choice, though he well knew that it was also perfectly impossible.

Firstly, the Pope would not dream of having the Council in the territory of his mortal enemy, the Duke of Milan²³, who for years had been sending his condottieri against the Papal State²⁴ and had even plotted against his person the previous year²⁵. Everybody knew that the formal peace of August 10, 1435, between Florence, Venice and the Pope on the one side and Milan on the other was tenuous²⁶, and

²³ Gill, p. 36, 46, 55

²⁴ Pius II: *Revised*, p. 344

²⁵ Gill, p. 82

²⁶ Gill, p. 82

that the Duke would most likely resume his depredations against the Papal State later, as he did in fact in 1438²⁷.

Secondly, the non-Italian Council Fathers did not want to go to Italy for the reason stated above, and they did not really want the Pope to be present. As the Bishop of Albenga, on Milanese territory, put it: *It was not expedient that the Pope should be personally present in the Council, where he would have pre-eminence and authority ...*²⁸. Piccolomini was quite aware of this. A short time before his speech, he wrote to the senate of Siena: *The Pope and all the Italians are in favour of an Italian city, but all the rest – enemies of the Latin name – refuse to come to Italy. I do not know whether it will be possible to transfer the Council to Italy, but I hope that our prudence and perseverance may triumph*²⁹, *and that Italy may eventually have the Council.*³⁰

And even if the Council members would accept an Italian city, they would be careful about choosing a city belonging to the Duke of Milan. The Duke was obviously a friend of the Council, but he was known as a devious and conniving Prince and “feared alike by his friends at Basel and his enemies of the papal party”³¹. Nobody would be unaware that his support was directly aimed at creating a counterbalance to the Pope. When the Duke no longer needed the Council, he might very well turn against it. And this was exactly what happened when the Duke and his ally, King Alfonso, became reconciled with the Pope in 1442-1443 and immediately declared themselves the enemies of the Council.³²

So, generally the Council Fathers would have reasonable cause for concern about choosing a place for the Council that would make them even more dependent on the Duke of Milan.

And finally, although the French King was diplomatic in his relationship with the Pope, whose support for the French candidate for the crown of the Kingdom of

²⁷ Gill, pp. 108-109

²⁸ Quoted after Gill, p. 89

²⁹ Better translation: “that our prudence will overcome their stubbornness”

³⁰ *Papa et Italici omnes Italiam petunt, reliqui omnes, Latini nominis inimici, venturos se in Italiam negant, nec scio, an erit possibile concilium ad Italiam transmutari, sed spero nostrorum prudentiam pertinaciam istorum superaturam et demum Italiam habiturum concilium.* Piccolomini: *Der Briefwechsel*, I/1, 2 (ep. 20). English translation quoted after Ady, p. 57

³¹ Boulting, p. 78; Ady, p. 58

³² Stieber, p. 62

Naples he needed³³, the French party at the Council evidently wanted a city in the French sphere, e.g. Avignon³⁴ – with the ulterior motive of attempting to draw the papacy back to that city and consequently under French domination. In the summer of 1436, the French party did in fact propose three French cities for the Council: Vienne, Lyon and Avignon.

In conclusion: Piccolomini wanted to persuade the fathers to move the Council to Italy, something which was difficult, but quite justifiable given the Greek preference for an Italian city.

But the big question is: why did he argue in favour of Pavia, a city in Milanese territory that would be completely unacceptable to the Pope in view of the persistent enmity between the Pope and the Duke of Milan?

The Sienese option

If the oration was delivered on 18 October, 1436, cf. below, then a number of letters from Piccolomini to the magistrates in Siena provide documentation of Piccolomini's real aims with the speech.

In a letter of 9 April, 1436³⁵, Piccolomini informed the Sienese magistrates that the Greeks did not want the Reunion Council to be held in Basel, but preferred an Italian city, and he proposed that the magistrates make a bid to host the Council in Siena which was in the domains of neither the Duke of Milan nor the Pope.

In a letter of 6 August, 1436³⁶, he related the positive reception at the Council of a speech made by the Sienese envoy, Cione di Battista Orlandi. However, the Sienese offer of 30.000 ducats to provide for the needs of the Council fell far short of the offers of other Italian cities, especially Florence and Venice. He therefore exhorted the magistrates to raise the offer.

³³ Gill, p. 87

³⁴ Boulting, p. 78

³⁵ Piccolomini: *Epistolarium*, letter 20

³⁶ Piccolomini: *Epistolarium*, letter 21

On 24 October, 1436, i.e. almost a week after he gave the speech in favour of Pavia, he again wrote to the magistrates.³⁷ The day before, a messenger had arrived from Siena with a secret letter from the city to the President of the Council, Cardinal Cesarini. Cesarini told Piccolomini that the new offer of the city fell far short of the needs of the Council, which was a shame because if the city would make an offer of 70.000 ducats, then there were good reasons for the choice to fall on Siena. So, once again Piccolomini exhorted the city fathers to raise their offer, to this amount.

He did not tell the city fathers that he had just given a speech in favour of Pavia – that might have been awkward!

And finally, on 11 December, 1436,³⁸ he wrote to Siena that the majority of the Council was now favouring Avignon and that Florence had raised their offer to 120.000 ducats. He did not again exhort the magistrates to raise their own offer – the play for Siena was over.

From these letters it is clear that the real aim of Piccolomini in October 1436 was to move the Council to Siena. His purpose with the oration in favour of Pavia was not to move the Council to Pavia – that was plainly impossible – but to generally support an Italian venue for the Council, to indirectly prepare the grounds for Siena as a compromise solution, and – not the least – to gain the favour of the Duke of Milan.

4.2.2 To win the favour of the Duke of Milan

The second aim of the speech was to win the favour of the Duke of Milan³⁹.

Princes of the Renaissance were keen to enhance their reputation by having humanists extol their praises and act as propagandists in their cause. By his speech, *Audivi*, Piccolomini gave effective proof that he was quite capable and willing to act in this respect for the Duke of Milan.

³⁷ Piccolomini: *Epistolarium*, letter 22

³⁸ Piccolomini: *Epistolarium*, letter 23

³⁹ Boulting, pp. 78-79

The message was heard, the panegyrics of the Prince were appreciated, and the reward was not slow in coming: shortly afterwards Piccolomini was granted the provostship of San Lorenzo in Milan⁴⁰ and managed to get effective possession of the office in spite of the chapter of the church already having elected its own candidate.

Piccolomini's view of the Duke as expressed in the *Audivi* may or may not have been sincere, but undoubtedly it is in stark contrast with his later views⁴¹. There are two possible explanations of this contrast: either in 1436 Piccolomini was really an enthusiastic admirer of the great Duke of Milan, or he concealed his negative opinion of him with a view to promoting the general cause of the Council and to gain the Prince's favour. Those who focus on Piccolomini's opportunism prefer the latter explanation. Others who see him as a young, impoverished person trying to gain a foothold in the world and given to youthful enthusiasms may prefer the former. The truth may be somewhere in the middle ...

4.2.3 To obtain the favour of the Council Fathers

A third aim was to promote Piccolomini's career at the Council by making a positive impression on the Fathers through a skillful and well-crafted speech in the new humanist style.

In this, too, Piccolomini succeeded. As he himself wrote in the *Commentaries*: *For two hours he declaimed before a most attentive and admiring audience. Afterwards, everyone who heard his speech had a copy made for himself. From that time on, Aeneas grew more popular in the Council and in the favor of the Duke of Milan. Although his official title was merely psalmist, he acted as secretary and abbreviator and often sat on the Committee of Twelve. This post ... was extremely influential ...*⁴²

⁴⁰ Pius II: *Commentaries*, I, p. 33-34; Ady, pp. 58-59

⁴¹ Boulting, p. 79

⁴² Pius II: *Commentaries*, I, p. 33

4.2.4 To exercise his rhetorical and persuasive skills

By this time in his life, Piccolomini was itching to make an impact on public affairs and to do so in the way for which he was eminently suited: as an orator of great persuasive skills and able to draw on an extensive knowledge of major works of classical Latin literature.

In *Audivi* he was, so to speak, unfolding his oratorical wings and beginning his career as one of Renaissance Europe's greatest speakers⁴³.

No doubt, he had his convictions and spoke passionately for things he believed in, but he was also quite able to shape his arguments and his rhetorics to suit the particular situation and the interest he had chosen or been chosen to defend - as any lawyer – of any time - and somewhat of modern spindoctor.

Even though he may have been impressed by the Duke of Milan, he could not himself have believed in the splendid image of that Prince which he held up to the Council Fathers: he did not truly believe in fanciful classical genealogies⁴⁴, but nonetheless he exploited the one of the house of Visconti to try to convince the fathers that the Turk would prefer to let the Greeks go to the Duke's territory. And against better knowledge – we must believe – he downplayed to an absurd degree the enmity between the Pope and the Duke.

However, all these efforts were rhetorical ploys to persuade the fathers to make the choice he passionately believed in: to move to Council to a city in Italy.

And he did it in the new humanist way: by drawing on classical literature as an authority and an embellishment to his argumentation.

It is quite remarkable that his speech to the Council fathers contained at least 30 quotations from classical authors and none from the Bible or the Church Fathers.

⁴³ Boulting, p. 79

⁴⁴ Note Mansi's comment: *Est vero oratio inter Pianas longe gravissima et eloquentissima, quamquam ab aetatis illius vitio, haud omnino immunis, cum quaedam habeat intermixta dubiae fidei, ne dixerim fabulosa, ut illud de Vicecomitum origine, quam commune habere illos cum Turcis affirmat.* Pius II: *Orationes*, p. 3 This theory is indeed fanciful, but, as we shall see, Piccolomini presumably had it from the learned humanist scholar, Andrea Biglia, whose lectures he had attended in Siena

In the end it was all for nothing: even Piccolomini's great rhetorical skills could not persuade the fathers to move to Italy, but he had demonstrated his abilities to the Council and was soon appreciated as an intelligent and dependable lay official whose gifts for analysis, speaking and writing were highly esteemed.

4.3 Major themes

The major theme of the speech is, of course, the venue for the future Council. However, two other important themes are interwoven in the text, i.e. the conflict between conciliarism and the papacy, and the burgeoning of humanism in the great debates of Europe.

4.3.1 The venue of the future Council

In spite of his preposterous claims about the benevolent nature of the Duke of Milan and the present friendship between the Duke and the Pope, Piccolomini himself – as mentioned above - and everybody would know that there was no way in which the Pope could be persuaded to enter Milanese territory, and the Council Fathers would not like it either since nobody trusted the Prince.

Apart from that, Piccolomini's line of reasoning in favour of Pavia is clear, logical and sensible. It rests on three main arguments:

- Pavia is acceptable to the Greeks
- Pavia is convenient for the Pope
- Pavia can provide board and lodging

All reasonably and credibly argued.

The fourth argument, that Pavia offers security and freedom, is the one that would defy belief.

4.3.2 The opposition between conciliarism and the papacy

The conflict between conciliarism and the Pope is rather clearly, but politely stated in Piccolomini's speech which is the first public declaration of his own adherence to the conciliarist position. He would later abandon it and join the papal party for which he would incur the censure of later historians, especially his German, 19th century biographer Georg Voigt. This is quite surprising in view of the fact that many other luminaries of the age, including Cardinal Nicholas of Cues, did exactly the same with no blemish on their reputation.

Even at this time, Piccolomini is quite respectful of the Pope. He explicitly states that the Pope is *the true successor of Peter and the Vicar of Christ. He is our head, which should never be separated from us, for a body cannot be complete without its head. He is the bridegroom of the Church; he is the captain of the ship; he is (as people say) God on earth. Through Peter and Peter's successors Christ, our Saviour, has given him the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, though I do not deny that they have also been given to the Church as a whole. To him has been given so great an authority, so great a power, so great a knowledge of the divine mysteries that he is to be revered above all. Indeed, the papal dignity is so venerable that we must honour and revere the Pope – even an evil one. So, whatever lust he may have indulged in, or whatever crime he may have committed, he must not be held in contempt until the Church has passed judgment.*⁴⁵

And concerning Pope Eugene himself, Piccolomini mentions *his holy life, ... his piety, his clemency, his fairness, his sense of justice, and his goodness.*⁴⁶

However, entwined in the statements of respect are the defiant tenets of conciliarism:

Firstly, the Church is a body, i.e. a corporation. Granted the pope is the head, but just as the body cannot function without the head, the head cannot function without the body. The head and the body form an undivisible whole.

Secondly, the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven have not only been given to the pope as the successor of the Apostle Peter, but to the Church as a whole - which is represented by the Council.

⁴⁵ Section 33

⁴⁶ Section 34. This reflects the general conception of the Pope's personality and private life, held even in Basel, cf. Gill, p. 197

And thirdly, though even an evil pope must be respected, he can be judged by the Church, i.e. the Council, as it happened at the Council of Constance. This is in direct opposition to the medieval, papalist maxim that nobody may judge the pope.⁴⁷

So, at this juncture Piccolomini clearly supported conciliarism – though respectfully so.

4.3.3 Humanist learning

The terms “humanist” or “Renaissance” had not yet been invented, but to the Council Fathers it would have been evident that the speech they were hearing was in that new rhetorical style from Italy: fresh, direct, elegant ... and classical.⁴⁸

Piccolomini knew quite well what he was doing. In the beginning of the speech he directly refers to the persuasive skills of Demosthenes in the Athenian Senate and to the fact that many in the conciliar assembly detested rhetorics. But then he neatly extricates himself from possible embarrassment by referring to Cicero, that revered and towering figure of antiquity.⁴⁹

The Fathers would have been reassured by some conventional references to God and the Scriptures and by the direct invocation of God at the end of the *exordium*. But they would have noticed, too, that all the direct quotations in the speech were from classical authors, mostly from the major works of Cicero, but also from some authors who might not be quite proper in the context, like Juvenal and Terence.

The use of general maxims or statements on morals, geography, and politics drawn from Cicero and other classical authors would be safe. But to the modern mind it is somewhat surprising that a speaker at the Council of Basel would be free to refer to the pagan Gods (*Astrea withdrew to the Gods above*, Juvenal⁵⁰), even if the reference was poetical. And applying pagan attributes to the God of the Christians like Terence’s *whose thunders shakes the highest realms of heaven*⁵¹ would seem to

⁴⁷ “Papa a nemine judicetur”

⁴⁸ Voigt, p. 117; Boulting, p. 79

⁴⁹ Section 6

⁵⁰ Section 49

⁵¹ Section 7

be risky. However, Piccolomini did it throughout his career and even as a Pope when he wrote the liturgical office of Catherine of Siena whom he canonized.

And this is the true hallmark of Piccolomini as a humanist: the going back to classical authors as real, living “authorities”, and not just by way of embellishments or cultured references to a noble past - though that purpose was served as well.

The classical rhetorical models for Piccolomini were Cicero and Quintilian. As mentioned, Piccolomini refers directly to Cicero’s rhetorics in his speech, and from his later writings it is evident that he knew the work of Quintilian.

As for contemporary humanist authors, it seems probable that Piccolomini used materials on the origins of the Turks which he had from one of his teachers in Siena, Andrea Biglia, the Milanese humanist, cf. below. He also has two direct quotations from Leonardo Bruni’s *De Militia*⁵², and he has two other quotations from Guarino Veronese’s translation of Plutarch’s *De Liberis educandis*⁵³. Both the Plutarch translation and the *De Militia* he very probably had access to in the collection of one of the Council Fathers, Archbishop Pizzolpasso of Milan⁵⁴ who became friend and mentor to Piccolomini, and who helped him to obtain a prebend in Milan, and asked him to give his second oration at the Council of Basel, i.e. a sermon on the feastday of Saint Ambrose. Piccolomini may actually have met both Bruni and Guarino when, as a student, he visited Firenze and Ferrara. In a letter from 1434, two years before he gave the oration *Audivi*, he mentions them, together with Ambrogio Traversari, as contemporary luminaries of scholarship⁵⁵, and he pays tribute to both of them in later writings⁵⁶. Keeping in touch with the humanist network in Italy was not easy for someone living north of the Alps, but these early quotations show that this mattered to Piccolomini.

⁵² Sections 4, 55

⁵³ Section 80. Cf. Iaria, p. 2

⁵⁴ Iaria, p. 5, 23

⁵⁵ Piccolomini: *Der Briefwechsel*, I/1, 28-29 (ep. 16)

⁵⁶ I.e. in the section on Leonardo Bruni in his *De Viris Illustribus*, where he even directly mentions Guarino’s translation of Plutarch’s work, *De alendis liberis*, p. 35, cf. Iaria, p. 5, and in his *Commentarii*. NB: Iaria notes that a codex with the *De re militari* only came into the archbishop’s possession in 1439, so Piccolomini have have known it from another source

Piccolominis rhetorics have been studied by Johannes Helmrath in his impressive work on oratory at the German diets⁵⁷ and by Albert Baca⁵⁸. A major study on the subject is, however, still outstanding.

4.4 Minor themes

A number of minor themes in the text may be highlighted here.

4.4.1 The origins of the Turks

The conception of the Turks as descendants of the Trojans goes back to the Middle Ages, in particular to a genealogy of the Frankish Kings in the Chronicles of Fredegar from the 7th century and to a note in the Gesta Francorum from the 12th century.⁵⁹

It was picked up in a text from 1345 purporting to be a letter from Umur Pasha (Morbisanus) to Pope Clement VI as a reaction to a crusaders' attack on Izmir. The letter was written in Italian and later translated into Latin and other languages. Over time, it was readressed to various popes, also to Pius II, and it was often published together with that Pope's letter to Mehmed II as the sultan's reply to the Pope.⁶⁰ The letter implies that the Turks are descended from the Trojans, and the Pasha vows to avenge the fall of Troy by attacking the Greeks who had, of course, conquered Troy.

The notion of the Turks descending from the Trojans was probably known to Coluccio Salutati, who was the first to apply the name Teucris (used by Virgil for the Trojans) to the Turks. However, he did not himself state explicitly that the Turks were the Trojans' descendants.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Helmrath: *Reichstagsreden*

⁵⁸ Baca

⁵⁹ Meserve: *Empire*, p. 23; Meserve: *Medieval*

⁶⁰ Meserve: *Empire*, pp. 35-37

⁶¹ Meserve: *Empire*, pp. 26-27; Hankins, p. 136

However, that idea – as based on the false etymological approximation of Teucri (Troians) and Turci/Turcae (Turks) – spread to the Renaissance humanists who debated the issue hotly. It did not take long before the idea was rejected, and other forefathers of the Turks were considered to be more likely, e.g. the ancient Scythians, though that theory was also incorrect. The Trojan origins of the Turks nonetheless resurfaced from time to time⁶², e.g. in the poem *Amyris* by Giovanni Mario Filelfo, the son of Francesco⁶³.

One of the most influential debaters of the origins of the Turks was our Piccolomini, who quite emphatically rejected the idea of the Turks' descent from the Trojans and propagated the theory of their descent from the Scythians instead⁶⁴. According to Meserve, Piccolomini was “*the most important – certainly the most frequent – critic of the idea*” of the Trojans as forefathers of the Turks.⁶⁵ And Schwoebel writes that “*Pius had no time for the theories about the Turks avenging their ancestors or occupying a rightful inheritance*”.⁶⁶ Hankins even states that the theme recurred so often in Pius' writings that it amounted to an obsession.⁶⁷ His reasoning was based on his reading of classical authors which certainly did not support the Trojan thesis, but otherwise his theory of their descent from the Scythians was to a great extent motivated by his desire, shared by humanists in general, to assign a barbaric and primitive origin to that great enemy of Europe and of Christianity, the Turks.⁶⁸

In the speech *Audivi* from 1436, however, Piccolomini had not yet adopted this line of reasoning. On the contrary, he states that the Duke of Milan “descends from the Turks of old” and is thus “related to them by a hereditary bond⁶⁹” which cannot in good faith be disclaimed” (“*scientes ducem cum Turcis, unde vetustissimam trahit originem, hereditariam habere familiaritatem, quod, salva fide, vituperari non*

⁶² Spencer; Schwoebel, pp. 31-32, 148, 188-189, 204-205; Bisaha, p. 89-90

⁶³ Schwoebel, pp. 148-149; Bisaha, pp. 89; Meserve: *Empire*, p. 41-43

⁶⁴ Piccolomini in the oration *Constantinopolitana* clades from 1454, section 13: *Neque enim – ut plerique arbitrantur – Asiani sunt ab origine Turci, quos vocant Teucro*. Cf. Bisaha, pp. 75-76; Helmrath: *Pius*, pp. 106-111; Meserve: *Medieval*, pp. 419-425

⁶⁵ Meserve: *Empire*, p. 22

⁶⁶ Schwoebel, p. 70-71

⁶⁷ Hankins, p. 140

⁶⁸ Bisaha, p. 78; Meserve: *Empire*, p. 197

⁶⁹ *Hereditaria familiaritas*

potest)”⁷⁰. When Piccolomini states that the Duke descends from the Turks, he means the Trojans, cf. below on the Trojan genealogy of the house of Visconti. He thus uses the term “Turks” to mean both the Turks of his own time and the Trojans of antiquity, thereby implying that the contemporary Turks are descendants of the Trojans. This idea is reinforced a little later when Piccolomini calls the Turks “the avengers of the destruction Troy” (“Troianae ruinae ultores”)”⁷¹ which is a medieval theme – as seen above – and well-known in the humanist discourse on the Turks. Until now, scholars do not seem to have focused on this early statement by Piccolomini which seems to support the theory that the Turks were descendants of the Trojans, but in any case it was not long before Piccolomini gave up that idea. He did, however, use the term Teucrici for the Turks as late as January 1447, in the oration *Tritum est sermo* to Eugene IV.

The question of the provenance of this notion does, however, remain. A most probable source is the Augustinian friar Andrea Biglia⁷², who lectured at the University of Siena from 1429 and had Piccolomini as one of his students at least towards the end of 1431⁷³. Piccolomini may not have seen Biglia’s book *Commentarii de defectu fidei in oriente [sive de origine Turcharum]*⁷⁴, completed shortly after May 1433⁷⁵, when he had already left Siena for Basel, but he would quite probably have known of Biglia’s ideas from lectures and discussions. Biglia’s book has been called “the first substantial discussion of early Turkish history by an Italian humanist”⁷⁶. He considered the Turks to be the descendants of a number of peoples in classical Asia Minor, including the Trojans (Teucrici), and he uses the term Teucricians for the Turks of his own time⁷⁷. Though he did not refer to the Turks as the avengers of Troy⁷⁸, he stated outright that the Turks “love the Visconti [of Milan],

⁷⁰ Section 20

⁷¹ Cf below

⁷² Meserve: *Empire*, p. 34

⁷³ “*Andreas Mediolanensis, quem Senis audivi*”. Piccolomini: *De viris illustribus* [Leonardo Bruni (Aretino)], 36, 10. Cf. *Dizionario Bibliografico degli Italiani* (Treccani web-ed.);

⁷⁴ Helmrath: *Pius*, p. 100, 106-107; Webb

⁷⁵ Meserve: *Empire*, p. 169. Helmrath refers to a *Commentarii historici detrimentio fidei sive de origine Turcharum* from 1432-1435, cf. *Reichstagsreden*, p. 106

⁷⁶ Black: *Benedetto*, pp. 227 ff. Cf Helmrath: *Reichstagsreden*, pp. 106-107

⁷⁷ “*For the ships of the Venetians and Genoese fill that sea, on whose shores the Teucricians possess much land ...*”

Meserve: *Empire*, p. 182. Piccolomini, too, uses the term Teucrici at this time, cf. in a letter to Siena of 6 August, 1436 (Piccolomini, *Epistolarium*, letter 21)

⁷⁸ Meserve: *Empire*, p. 35

because they say they [themselves]⁷⁹ were descended from Aeneas the Trojan”⁸⁰ – though the Turks, of course, said nothing of the sort. Biglia, who wrote a history of Milan, must have been familiar with the genealogy of the Visconti constructed earlier in the century and making that family, too, the descendants of the Trojans. Piccolomini uses the very same theme of Turkish benevolence towards the Viscontis as founded in a common hereditary relationship, i.e. descent from the Trojans, and until evidence to the contrary is produced, it may quite reasonably be assumed that he had taken over this notion from Biglia.

Diana Webb concludes her article on the *Rise and Fall of Eastern Christianity* (1975) with an expression of regret that Piccolomini did not say whether it was Biglia’s *Commentarii de defectu fidei in oriente* he was thinking of when he remembered Biglia as a “*historiarum scriptor*”⁸¹. Piccolomini quite probably knew about a number of Biglia’s works, including his history of Milan, and he must also have known about the *Commentarii* and considered it as one of the “histories” that Biglia wrote. Indeed, Biglia’s influence on Piccolomini’s conception of historians and on his fascination with history⁸² may have been quite important and merits further study.

Another possible source for Piccolomini’s notion that the Turks were descendants of the Trojans are the contacts and conversations during his wanderings years in the late 1420’s with humanists in Florence and elsewhere, and among them Leonardo Bruni, who was much admired by Piccolomini. They would have been familiar with the ideas of their old master Salutati.

In Florence, Piccolomini also had some form of contact with Francesco Filelfo, who may at the time had Turkophile leanings⁸³. Filelfo claims that Piccolomini was his student for two years in Florence, something which seems unlikely. At least it is not acknowledged by Piccolomini himself, and it is explicitly contradicted by his cousin, Goro Lolli.⁸⁴ However, there was at least some contact, as evidenced by their letters mentioned above, and Piccolomini may well have been confronted with a more

⁷⁹ “*sese*”

⁸⁰ Meserve: *Empire*, p. 182

⁸¹ Webb, p. 216

⁸² Piccolomini: *De gestis*, p. 3

⁸³ Hankins, p. 130

⁸⁴ Ady, p. 22-23

broadminded conception of the Turks in that environment. As a consummate opportunist – some would say like Piccolomini himself – Filelfo later espoused the humanist propaganda against the Turks, but nonetheless his son, Giovanni Mario, wrote the above-mentioned *Amyris* whose early sections contain the notion of the Turks being the descendants of the Trojans and the theme of the Turks as avengers of the Trojans.

Later Piccolomini's view of the matter was completely reversed, partly because of the growing Turkish threat to Europe culminating in the fall of Constantinople in 1453, and partly because of his reading of Aethicus from whom he took over the theory of the Turks having descended from the Scythians – in the mistaken belief that Aethicus was a classical and therefore an authoritative source.⁸⁵

4.4.2 The French interest

The French interest⁸⁶ was a challenge for a speaker who wanted to see the Council being held in Italy, in part because the interests of the French court and the French clergy did not coincide.

The prelates wanted to strengthen the status of the Gallican church as a national church and to reduce papal influence over French church affairs. The King supported this policy which was eventually to be expressed in the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges (but on the other hand the Crown would not want the French church to become too strong and independent of the royal power).⁸⁷

Moreover, the high clergy and the King both wanted to have the Council transferred to Avignon in order to reinforce French influence over the Council and – who knows – may be later to effect a return of the papacy to Avignon and the French sphere of interest. The anti-Italian attitude of the French party was clearly expressed by the Bishop of Tours, Philippe de Coëtquis who said: *“Either we should snatch the*

⁸⁵ Hankins, p. 137; Bisaha, pp. 75-76. Other sources for Piccolomini's later theory were Otto von Freising and Niccoló Sagundino

⁸⁶ Helmuth: *Basel*, pp. 205-210

⁸⁷ Stieber, pp. 64-71

*Apostolic See from the hands of the Italians, or we should leave it plucked bare, so that, wherever it remains, it can do nothing.”*⁸⁸

But the King himself also wanted the Pope’s support in the question of the Kingdom of Naples where the House of Anjou, part of the extended royal family of France, was fighting for the Crown with the Spanish House of Aragon. So the French King did not wish to antagonise the Pope who had until then favoured the French claims. It is, therefore, not surprising that the King sent one his most seasoned diplomats, Simon Charles⁸⁹, to Basel in order to ensure that his hotheaded clerics would not jeopardize his relations with the Pope and compromise the French cause in Southern Italy.

In the matter of the venue for the Council, Simon thus played a subtle role. No doubt he secretly preferred Avignon, but publicly he maintained his role as a cautious adviser and a friend to the Council, and as someone who accepted and respected its independence. So he did not declare himself openly for Avignon. This ambiguity Piccolomini exploited recklessly in his speech when he exclaimed that what the King’s ambassador *asks is good and worthy of being granted. For Simon admonishes us to avoid grounds for a schism, he asks us as to agree a location with the Pope, and he does not recommend or reject any place by name. If I am not mistaken, his words advise us to choose Pavia ...*⁹⁰

The French clergymen at the Council were probably quite exasperated at hearing this, and Piccolomini himself at the end of the speech took care to soothe the feelings of the Cardinal of Arles, the most prominent figure among the French party at the Council, who certainly did not want to move the Council to an Italian city.⁹¹

So, at least there was one party among the audience which Piccolomini did not aim to please, attacking as he did the French position under cover of fulsome praise for the royal House of France and its pretend respect of the independence of the Council.

⁸⁸ Pius II: *Revised*, p. 346

⁸⁹ Helmuth: *Basel*, p. 87

⁹⁰ Section 48

⁹¹ Section 84

4.4.3 Other themes

Some other themes may be indicated here:

Democracy

Throughout his life, Piccolomini was no admirer of democracy. Democracy had actually cost his own family its position in Siena when aristocratic government was overthrown and replaced by a – somewhat more - democratic regime.

The Council of Basel itself was a powerful expression of conciliarism and an exponent of a democratic government of the Church in opposition to papal, monarchic government, and Piccolomini at the time certainly favoured this movement.

However, this did not translate into his political views: even to the young Piccolomini, the people was a dangerous animal, and those who were boasting of the name of liberty (i.e. democracy), were in reality “slaves ... who believe that freedom is to have many masters.”⁹²

And later in the speech, he says about the common people that it “is mostly unstable, seditious, quarrelsome, eager for political change, and opposed to peace and quiet.”⁹³

So, Piccolomini would not be deaf to the assertion of the Pope that the revolt of the Council against the papal monarch was a threat to all monarchic governments. The Pope in a *Libellus Apologeticus* from June 1436, destined to the Princes of Europe, asked: “Why do they [i.e. the Council Fathers] hasten to bring down this monarchy [i.e. the papacy], which God has established by his own word, to a popular state and to a democracy?”⁹⁴

⁹² Section 63

⁹³ Section 85

⁹⁴ Stieber, pp. 27-28. The Latin text has: “*Cur monarchiam hanc, quam Deus suo ore instituit, ad popularem status et ad democratiam deducere festinant.*”

Dependence on the Princes

The Council considered itself the highest authority in religious matters, and although the Council fathers may have solicited the assistance of Princes and been grateful for it, they considered it to be their God-given right.

The support of the Princes was, in fact, extremely important to the Council as the Princes could require their bishops to attend the Council, but they could also obstruct and forbid it.

Furthermore, they could give financial assistance to the Council and favour a number of conciliar decisions which required their cooperation, e.g. the provision of ecclesiastical benefices and offices in their respective territories.

Finally, their support was all-important in the conflict between the Pope and the Council, and eventually the Council would flounder because ultimately the Princes would favour their fellow-monarch, the Pope.⁹⁵

Not surprisingly, a number of Council Fathers were resentful of and annoyed by the Council's perceived dependence on the Princes⁹⁶. Piccolomini boldly gave expression to this frustration when he praised the attitude of the French ambassador, Simon Charles, who may have given advice to the Council but then left *"the decision to the Council thus subordinating his own opinion to the view of the universal Church."*⁹⁷

Piccolomini at this point rebuked the Council Fathers for unduly deferring to the Princes and for not having the courage to do anything that displeased them.

Undoubtedly, the youthful speaker and very junior participant in the Council here gave voice to the views of senior churchmen, quite possibly or probably to those of Cardinal Cesarini, the president of the Council, with whose permission he was speaking. Cesarini would not have forgotten that one of the five aims of the Council, stated in his letter of appointment, was to preserve the freedom of the Church from secular power.

⁹⁵ Stieber, p. 71

⁹⁶ Helmuth: *Basel*, pp. 92 ff.

⁹⁷ Section 49

National stereotypes

In the Renaissance, as in all other ages, national stereotyping was quite widespread, and Piccolomini used it often in his writings. The French whom he disliked were certainly not spared.

Today, national character is still being studied under such names as 'cultural differences', 'cultural identity', or 'cultural psychology'.

In the *Audivi* there is one instance of national stereotyping, in this case a positive one.

Commenting on the faithfulness of the people of Pavia, Piccolomini compares them to the Germans, about whose "faithfulness, seriousness and steadfastness" he could never say enough: "They keep their oaths firmly and honestly."⁹⁸

Logistics and provisions

The Council of Basel had a large number of members – with their households. Therefore, the matter of logistics, transport and provisions was undoubtedly an important issue in the debates concerning the future location of the Council.

Firstly, the matter of transport: it may surprise a modern reader to learn that transport as such does not seem to have been perceived as a problem. They could ride, walk or be carried in various types of vehicle, but this was an ordinary and commonplace procedure, and though they would even cross mountains on their way to Italy, Piccolomini does not find it necessary to comment on the hardships of traveling by road. He does at some point mention the comforts of transport on river barges, however, so the issue is not quite absent.

Safety from attacks by enemies and robbers was quite another matter, and Piccolomini is quite careful in outlining how the journey from Basel to Pavia would go through the territories of a friendly Prince.

⁹⁸ Section 65

Sea travel may have been a convenient form of transportation, but even this form of travel was quite hazardous, as Piccolomini had himself experienced on his way from Piombino to Genova and later when he went to Scotland.

Secondly, the matter of lodgings: great care is taken in determining the number of houses to be made available to the leading members of the Council and their retinues. The others would have to get accommodation how best they could.

Thirdly, the matter of provisions: this is evidently an important issue, and one of the major reasons advanced in favour of Pavia is the ease of provisioning that city with food from the rich agricultural area surrounding it.

News and spies

As always, intelligence was extremely important, and the speech contains a couple of interesting references to how such intelligence was obtained and disseminated.

Speaking of relations between the Pope and the Duke of Milan, Piccolomini mentions a certain Roberto of Florence. We may presume that this Roberto was Roberto Martelli, the manager of the Medici Bank's office in Basel from 1433-1438. Piccolomini calls him a "diligent gatherer of news, who is in possession of many letters."⁹⁹ Quite evidently the network of an international bank was an important instrument for gathering and disseminating news on matters affecting its affairs, even including copies of letters between Princes.

Another intelligence network is the Prince's network of spies (*exploratores*). Among the three things in favour of choosing the territory of Milan as the location for the Council is the fact that he can eliminate all risk to the Council *for the Prince, being placed in a highly dangerous situation, endeavours to know through spies the secrets of many lords and various city states*. Stated quite matter-of-factly! A Prince who wants to eliminate every kind of danger must necessarily know about the affairs and plans of his enemies – and of his allies – and a spy network was apparently quite the acceptable thing.

⁹⁹ Section 39

Through his voluminous correspondence Piccolomini was himself a veritable hub of intelligence, and some of his youthful activities might actually have come rather close to spying, cf. his letter to the ruler of Piombino on the fleet and fortifications of Genova.¹⁰⁰

Elsewhere, Piccolomini mentions another valued source of information: the couriers who were travelling all over Europe and from whom valuable information, even of remote places, might be obtained.¹⁰¹

5. The text

5.1. Manuscripts

The Audi is extant in the 10 following manuscripts:

Lucca, Bibl. Cap.

544 (L)

Mantova, Bibl. Com.

100. A-IV-26 (N)

¹⁰⁰ Piccolomini: *Der Briefwechsel*, I/1, pp. 5-6 (ep. 4)

¹⁰¹ Piccolomini: *Der Briefwechsel*, I/1, pp. 590

Milano, Bibl. Ambrosiana

M 44. 7 (Etsi numquam)¹⁰² **(O)**

I. 97 inf. **(R)**

Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

Chis.I.VI.211 **(D)**

Chis.I.VII. 251 (Magnae saepe res) **(Z)**

Chis.I.VIII 284 **(A)**

Chis.I. VIII 286 **(C)**

Vat. Lat. 1788 **(B)**

Venice, Biblioteca Marciana

Lat., XI. 77 (4193) (Magnae saepe res) **(V)**

5.2. Edition

The *Audivi* has only been edited once, as part of Mansi's edition of the orations of Pius II (Mansi, 1755-1759). The edition is based on the late manuscript in Lucca (L), derived from D (Chis. 211). The Lucca manuscript has remarkably many variants from D, many of them concerning word order. As the Lucca manuscript is the manuscript that is most remote from A, I consider that Mansi's edition of the orations as based on L is not a satisfactory version of the texts as edited under the supervision of Pius himself. However, as the only complete edition of the orations edition of

¹⁰² "Liber olim Lancini Curtii Artium Scholaris Mediol. Ann. 1484 ut in prima pagina *c in fine* codicis." Containing a selection of humanist Latin texts, including one by Piccolomini, i.e. the *Audivi* with another introduction partly than the introduction in BAV, Chis. I. VII. 251 (Magnae saepe res)

Piccolomini/Pius for two and a half centuries it has, of course, been highly useful to generations of scholars.

5.3. Textual history

The collation of manuscripts support, I believe, the hypothesis that there are at least three versions of the text:

An early version with a foreword beginning with the words *Saepe res magnae* (V, Z).

A middle with a foreword beginning with the words *Etsi numquam* (O).

And a final version forming part of the anthology of Piccolomini's orations prepared under his direct supervision when he was Pope and beginning with *Audivi* (the seven other manuscripts).

There may, of course, be other versions, not extant or known, and even an earlier one than the *Saepe res magnae*.

Concerning the textual history of the final version, the collation of manuscripts supports, I believe, the hypothesis that the "original" is A (Chis. 284), possibly copied from a now missing earlier "original" which may be called proto-A. C (Chis. 286) was prepared for Cardinal Ammanati, a papal favorite, and derives from A or from proto-A. The same applies to D (Chis. 211) prepared for Cardinal Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini, the papal nephew.¹⁰³

B (Vat.lat. 1788) derives from C. L (Lucca) derives from D.

R (Milano 97) derives from B.

N (Mantova) derives from A or from proto-A.

¹⁰³ Cf. also Helmrath

| | | |
|---|-----------|---|
| | V, Z | |
| | O | |
| | (proto-A) | |
| | A | |
| C | D | N |
| B | L | |
| R | | |

I consider the three manuscripts, A (Chis. 284), C (Chis. 286) , and D (Chis. 211) to be sufficient for establishing the text of the final version of Piccolomini’s speeches, prepared under Piccolomini’s own supervision. The other four manuscripts may, of course, be of interest in other respects.

Apart from the introduction, the differences between the three version of the *Audivi* are mostly differences of style (e.g. vocabulary and word order) and not of substance. A notable instance from a difference in substance is the case of ultores vs. occultores and cultores, cf. below.

The theoretical question may be raised if the *Saepe res magnae*-version (and the *Etsi numquam*-version) could conceivably be of later data than the *Audivi*-version prepared in the first part of Pius’ pontificate. It appears that, apart from features of the textual transmission, both external and internal features point to *Saepe res magnae* being the earlier version. Firstly, it is difficult to believe that the old and sick Pope would, shortly after having supervised the first edition of his collected orations, have written another version of the first oration, only adding a new introduction. Secondly, if the *Saepe res magnae* was the later version, it is curious that it was not at all picked up in the the later manuscript editions of the anthology. Thirdly, the title of the *Saepe res magnae* reflects Piccolomini’s early status (“per¹⁰⁴ dominum Eneam Silvium Senensem...”). If it is a reedited version of the *Audivi*, it

¹⁰⁴ elegantem et ornatum virum add. V

seems strange that the title of the *Audivi* reflecting Pius' papal status would have been dropped. Fourthly, there are some redundancies between the introduction to the *Saepe res magnae* and the main text that would be difficult to explain if they had been added to a version dated subsequently to the already thoroughly edited version prepared for the papal anthology. And fifthly, in the introduction to the *Saepe res magnae* there is mention of the episode of the Bishop of Albenga being carried into the assembly which might be meaningful in the actual context of the oration, but less so in an edition done almost thirty years later.

The matter has not yet to be discussed by scholars and the issue is by no means settled. However, a reasonable working hypothesis is that the *Saepe res magnae* is or is close to the original version of the oration as held by Piccolomini in Basel, whereas the *Audivi* is the final edition.

Apart from the introduction, the one substantial difference between the earlier versions and the final version of the *Audivi* concerns the expression **troianae ruinae ultores**, used in the *Saepe res magnae*. Chis. 284 (A), the manuscript probably produced under Pius' direct supervision, has the expression **troianae ruinae occultores**", cf. section 21. The somewhat later manuscripts, Vaticanus Latinus 1788 and the Chis. 286, have **troianae ruinae ultores**, while Chis. 211 has "troianae ruinae **cultores**". These variants do not seem to be due to scribal errors, but to intentional editing of the text. Both **occultores** and **cultores ruinae trojanae** seem somewhat artificial, whereas **ultores ruinae trojanae** is a well-known Renaissance topos connected with the Turks. Since in 1436 Piccolomini clearly thought that the Turks were descended from or related to the Trojans, he might quite naturally have used the term **ultores ruinae trojanae** about the Turks. This term with its implications of Turkish relatedness to the Trojans became quite unacceptable to him later when he read Aethicus and Otto von Freising and - under the impression of the Turkish expansion into Europe and the fall of Constantinople - developed the conception of the Turks as a barbaric people descending from those proto-barbarians, the Scythians. And when, as pope, he made this thesis central to his campaign for a crusade against the Turks, it became rather awkward for him to publish an edition of his orations where, in his very first oration, he called the Turks the avengers of Troy, implying that they were the descendants of the Trojans. So, it may reasonably be hypothesized that he had **occ-** added to **ultores**, making the Turks the "occultores"

instead of the “ultores” of the destruction of Troy meaning more or less that they would hide or cover up that destruction. In the manuscript associated with the Pope’s nephew, Cardinal Todeschini-Piccolomini (Chis. 211), the **occultores** was changed to just **cultores**, meaning “those who cultivate the [former,] ruined lands of the Trojans”. In two other manuscripts, associated with the Pope’s humanist protégé, Cardinal Ammanati (Chis. 286 and the Vat. Lat. 1788), the “occultores” was changed (back) to “ultores”. “Ultores” is also used in the later manuscript Mantova, Bibl. Com., 100. This issue will have to be examined further, but it seems a defensible position that here we have one instance of an earlier speech being modified to fit the later development of Piccolomini’s thought and the political situation of his pontificate.

6. The date

The date of the oration is given as May 1436 by Voigt¹⁰⁵ and Boulting¹⁰⁶, and as 11 May, 1436 by Helmrath¹⁰⁷. However, this date seems not to agree with events, referred to in the speech, that took place later than May.

Piccolomini mentions the peace between the Pope and the Duke of Milan as having been made “exacto jam anno”, cf. section 37.¹⁰⁸ The peace was concluded on 10 August, 1435, which was considerably less than a year ago if the speech was given in May. This objection does not hold, of course, if “exacto jam anno” does not mean “a year ago”, but “in the past year”.

The second objection to the May-date concerns key events in the Ligurian war¹⁰⁹. In 1421 the Republic of Genua came under the rule of the Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria

¹⁰⁵ Voigt, I, pp. 116 ff.

¹⁰⁶ Boulting, p. 80

¹⁰⁷ Helmrath, p. 141

¹⁰⁸ Unless it means in the past year

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Pesce, and notes to sections 37-38

Visconti, but still functioned as a separate state, and not as a part of the Milanese state. It continued its longstanding rivalry and conflict with the Kingdom of Aragon (Barcelona) which pursued an aggressive expansionist policy in the Western Mediterranean and had designs on the Kingdom of Naples which it eventually took over. On 5 August, 1435, at the sea battle of Ponza, the Genovese won a complete victory over King Alfonso of Aragon whom together with his brother, the King of Navarra they took prisoner. The Duke of Milan had the royal prisoners transported directly to Milan where he treated them royally. And, in a complete reversal of policies, he entered into an alliance with Alfonso, thereby creating a strong North-South power axis in Italy. This was a serious setback for Genova as well as a mortal insult. So, on 27 December the Genovese defected from the Duke and again became an independent republic. A war resulted which was the background for the Genovese joining forces with Venice and Florence in a league directed against Milan. The League Treaty was signed on 29 May. Piccolomini refers to it in his oration, cf. section 38, but he could not have known of it in May.

Piccolomi also refers to subsequent peace negotiations under the aegis of the Pope, cf. section 38. These negotiations began in Bologna, in August 1436.

In view of these facts, it is difficult to see how Piccolomini could have delivered the speech in May.

In this context it is highly interesting that the, presumably, oldest version of the oration, in the manuscript, the Chis. 251, cf. above, with the initial words *Saepe res magnae*, has the following title: “Oratio super electione loci pro futuro concilio ad reducendos Graecos habita Basileae in congregatione generali per dominum Eneam Silvium Senensem xv kal. Novembris¹¹⁰ MCCCCXXXVI.” Here the date is given as 18 October, 1436. So, until further research has produced more evidence, the facts as we know them today point to October rather than May as the month when the oration was delivered.

¹¹⁰ October 17

The pagination used in the latin text is from manuscript A.

The textual differences (but not insignificant differences of spellings or errors) between the earlier versions and the final version of the oration are indicated with fat types in the Latin text.

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II. Oration

Orationes¹¹¹ Aeneae Silvii Piccolominei Senensis, qui postea pontificatum maximum adeptus Pius Secundus appellatus est. Editae fuerunt ante et post susceptum¹¹² pontificatum.¹¹³

Et¹¹⁴ haec prima habita fuit ab eo nondum sacris initiato in concilio Basiliensi cum ageretur de loco eligendo pro oecumenico concilio cum Graecis habendo. Incipit¹¹⁵.

[1] {1r} Audiui, patres optimi atque sanctissimi, quae superioribus diebus viri cum eloquentia, tum etiam¹¹⁶ bonitate praestantes, Gaspar Perusinus, seu¹¹⁷ Florentinus, quod illa sit civitate donatus, ac Simon Venetus¹¹⁸ de suis legationibus referebant, quorum, si rite judico¹¹⁹, eo penitus tendebat oratio, ut ad se quisque concilium traheret: hic Venetias, ille Florentiam. Audiui etiam Isidorum¹²⁰ Raymundumque¹²¹ suam, ut quisque existimavit¹²², legationem anteferentem, et alios esse dicturos propediem non dubito. Itaque ut varia sunt loca, sic variae sunt affectiones concilium hoc sacratissimum diverse trahentes, quod praeter modum patriae quisque suae¹²³ favet, ut **magnopere**¹²⁴ formidandum sit, ne privatorum **affectibus**¹²⁵ concilium pessumdetur.

¹¹¹ Orationes ... Pontificatum *omit.* D

¹¹² *omit.* B, C

¹¹³ Lege feliciter *add.* A, N

¹¹⁴ Et ... Incipit : Oratio Enee Silvii Piccolominei Senensis habita Basilee pro loco deligendo pro oecumenico Concilio cum Grecis celebrando D, L; Habita Basileae pro loco deligendo ad oecumenicum concilium cum Graecis celebrandum M

¹¹⁵ *omit.* A, B, N

¹¹⁶ et V

¹¹⁷ sive V

¹¹⁸ de Valle V, Z

¹¹⁹ iudicio V

¹²⁰ Isodor- O *et passim*

¹²¹ Raymundum quod C; et Raymundum O

¹²² extimavit N, V; aestimavit A, B, C, O, R

¹²³ quisque suae : suae quisque L, M

¹²⁴ maxime O, V, Z

¹²⁵ affectionibus O, V, Z [A corrects: affectibus for affectionibus]

The Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini who later became Supreme Pontiff under the name of Pius II. They were made before and after his accession to the papacy.

And this the first one was made before he entered the clerical state, at the Council of Basel, during the negotiations about the choice of venue for the Ecumenical Council with the Greeks. Here it begins.

0. Introduction

0.1. The background

[1] Most excellent and holy fathers! Over the last days, I have heard¹²⁶ what those eloquent and good men, Gaspare of Perugia - or of Florence whose citizen he has become, and Simone of Venice¹²⁷ had to report concerning their missions. If I understood correctly, each of them wanted to draw the Council to his own city, Simone to Venice and Gaspare to Florence. I have also heard Isidoro¹²⁸ and Raimondo¹²⁹ favouring their own city, and I do not doubt that others will speak in the same vein during the next days. It would appear that there are as many sentiments as there are cities. Since everybody excessively favours his own home city¹³⁰, this holy Council is being drawn in all directions. Thus, it is highly to be feared that the Council will be a failure as a result of private interests.

¹²⁶ Piccolomini had attended meetings of the Council where envoys of various Italian cities argued the advantages of their own city as a venue for the impending Council with the Greek Church on union between the Latin Church and the Greek

¹²⁷ Presumably Simone della Valle, cf. Pius II: *Orationes*, p. 35, note 2

¹²⁸ Isidoro da Rosate: envoy of the Duke of Milano, who presented the case for Pavia so ineptly that the Council fathers bade him be silent. He thereby provided Piccolomini with an opportunity to take over ... and to shine, cf. Pius II: *Orationes*, p. 35, note 3. Piccolomini speaks disparagingly about him on other occasions, cf. *De Viris Illustribus*, IV, and a letter to Francesco Pizzolpasso of 5 December, 1442

¹²⁹ Raimondo Taloni: the Council fathers had delegated the matter of Avignon to him, cf. Pius II: *Orationes*, , p. 35, note 4

¹³⁰ "patria"

[2] Quibus de rebus maxima mecum¹³¹ ipse cogitatione¹³² contendi¹³³, facturus ne verba in publico essem, an tacitus permitterem¹³⁴ suo labi flumina impetu. Videbatur homini privato atque inerudito tacendum fore in eruditissimorum coetu virorum, quales hinc¹³⁵ atque hinc¹³⁶ video, quorum consilio et auctoritate universus orbis recte regi gubernarique possit. Neque dignum existimabam, ut ego homuncio os aperirem, ubi non doctores modo scientiarum, sed parentes¹³⁷ omnium facultatum¹³⁸ adessent.

[3] Ceterum cum me vestro¹³⁹ **adstrictum**¹⁴⁰ consortio meminissem, cum jurisjurandi¹⁴¹ a me suscepti verba repeterem, loquendum penitus existimavi **oportere**¹⁴², si juramento vellem satisfacere, cujus antehac numquam contempsi religionem. Namque et¹⁴³ ubi potui et¹⁴⁴ ubi licuit semper¹⁴⁵ huic concilio favi, vestraque opera ubique gentium {1v} publicavi, atque ubi verbis esse non potui, scriptis interfui. Namque, ita me Deus amet, semper hoc concilium magnifeci, semper esse saluti Christianorum putavi necessarium; atque ideo magno affectu erga ipsum semper accensus¹⁴⁶ extiti¹⁴⁷, cui **me ita**¹⁴⁸ dedi, ut corpus et quidquid¹⁴⁹ extra corpus habeo libenter pro eo sim¹⁵⁰ expositurus.

¹³¹ cum C

¹³² ipse cogitatione : cogitatione ipse L, M

¹³³ condendi R

¹³⁴ pretermitterem C

¹³⁵ habere V

¹³⁶ omit. V; inde Z

¹³⁷ patres D, L, M

¹³⁸ facultatem R

¹³⁹ nostro V

¹⁴⁰ adscriptum C; astrictum L, M, N, V, Z

¹⁴¹ jurisjurandum V

¹⁴² omit. O, V, Z

¹⁴³ omit. O

¹⁴⁴ omit. O

¹⁴⁵ et add. N

¹⁴⁶ omit. B, C, R

¹⁴⁷ accensus extiti : extiti accensus L, M

¹⁴⁸ me ita : ita me V, Z

¹⁴⁹ quidque V

¹⁵⁰ sum O

[2] For this reason, I have been thinking intensely about whether I should intervene in the debate, or silently let the river take its own course. On the one hand, it seemed that a private and unlearned man ought to remain silent in the assembly of most learned men that I see around me. Indeed, the whole world may be rightly ruled and governed by their counsel and authority! And I thought it would be improper for an insignificant person such as myself to open his mouth in an assembly where not only doctors in the various branches of knowledge¹⁵¹, but also Council fathers with all kinds of qualifications¹⁵² are present.

[3] On the other hand, when I considered my obligations towards your fellowship, and when I repeated to myself the words of my oath¹⁵³, I found it necessary to speak up if I were to keep it. For I have always highly respected that oath and have supported this Council whenever I could and had the possibility. I have spoken about your works everywhere, and where I could not speak I wrote. Always – and may God love me for it! – did I praise this Council; always did I consider it necessary for the salvation of the Christians; and always have I been so passionately engaged in the cause of the Council, to which I have given myself, that I would gladly sacrifice my own body and everything else, I have, in its service.

¹⁵¹ “scientia”

¹⁵² “parentes [D, M have patres] omnium facultum”. Meaning unclear

¹⁵³ Oaths: at this time oaths were still being taken very seriously and formed the basis of important contractual engagements, cf. section 65

[4] Indignum igitur¹⁵⁴ atque absurdum putabam verba pro eo non effundere, pro quo sententia sit neque corpori parcere. Quod si quis patriae obnoxius est vitam exponere, quanto magis concilio? Ac¹⁵⁵ si nullum discrimen concilii causa fugiendum est, quis verba inanemque linguae sonum retineat? Quis taciturnitatem laudet, ubi usui futurus est sermo? *Mulier*, ut¹⁵⁶ inquit Homerus, *taciturnitas decus affert*, sed non item¹⁵⁷ viro.

¹⁵⁴ itaque *add.* L, M

¹⁵⁵ At D, L, M, Z

¹⁵⁶ *omit.* N

¹⁵⁷ idem N

[4] Thus it seemed to me that it would be unseemly and absurd not to speak up in favour of something for which I am ready to give my life. If you have an obligation to give your life for your country, you have an even greater obligation to give it for the Council. And if you should shun no danger for the sake of the Council, then why should you withhold your words and voice? Who will praise your silence if your speech would be useful? *Homer says that silence makes a woman beautiful, but this does not apply to a man.*¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ This is a direct quote from Leonardi Bruni: *De Militia*, 1422: *Mulieri inquit Homerus taciturnitas decus affert, sed non item viro. Bruni*, p. 384. The quote has not been found in Homer, but Sophocles, *Ajax*, 293 has: *Gynaïksi kósmon è sigé phèrei*. Quoted after the Loeb edition of 1994. St. Paul alludes to this passage in 1st Corinthians 14, 34

[5] Judicavi ergo non solum decere me¹⁵⁹ loqui, sed oportere in tanto hujus sacri concilii periculo, quando¹⁶⁰ nullum adhuc audivi, qui ea dixerit, quae a me impraesentiarum, si placuerit, audietis. Et quoniam jam vos video¹⁶¹ paratos et promptos ad audiendum, utinam illa¹⁶² mihi¹⁶³ dicendi vis esset eaque persuadendi¹⁶⁴ auctoritas, qua olim in Atheniensi senatu adversus Aeschinem pro **Ctesiphonte**¹⁶⁵ usum ajunt fuisse Demosthenem.

[6] Neque enim ego dicendi artem facundiamque contemno, quemadmodum plerosque in hac congregatione perspexi, qui eam¹⁶⁶ magnopere detestantes nullam omnino se habere aut habere se velle dixerint¹⁶⁷ eloquentiam. Ego enim ita sentio, et sic testem habeo Ciceronem, *rerum dominam esse vim eloquendi*¹⁶⁸, *quae sola facit, ut ea quae ignoramus discere, et quae scimus alios docere possimus*. Quae quantum mihi modo¹⁶⁹ esset opportuna, nemo me melius novit. Multa enim scio et mentis video luminibus, quae non ut vellem vobis possum¹⁷⁰ insinuare, quando eam¹⁷¹ mihi video¹⁷² deesse¹⁷³, cui soli et orandi et exorandi attributum¹⁷⁴ est¹⁷⁵ munus.

¹⁵⁹ omit. C

¹⁶⁰ quanto C

¹⁶¹ vos video : video vos O

¹⁶² omit. C, O

¹⁶³ illa mihi : mihi illa L, M

¹⁶⁴ omit. V

¹⁶⁵ Tesiphonte B; Thesiphonte R; Demofonte O, V, Z

¹⁶⁶ ea R

¹⁶⁷ dixerunt V

¹⁶⁸ vim eloquendi : eloquendi vim N

¹⁶⁹ mihi modo: modo mihi Z

¹⁷⁰ vobis possum : possum vobis B, D, L, R, M

¹⁷¹ enim L, M

¹⁷² omit. V

¹⁷³ quae non ... deesse omit. O [NB: proves that V and Z cannot have been copied from O]

¹⁷⁴ attributus V

¹⁷⁵ sit L, M

[5] I have come to the conclusion that I should, nay I must speak up in this situation of grave danger to the Sacred Council, as I have not as yet heard anyone say the things you shall hear from me now, if you so permit. And as I see that you are ready to listen, I wish that I may have the same ability to speak and authority to convince as Demosthenes¹⁷⁶ used when he spoke in the Athenian Senate for Ktesiphon against Aeschines¹⁷⁷.

[6] For I do not despise the art of speaking and eloquence even though I am aware that many in this assembly claim to detest them, and do not have any eloquence at all, nor want to have it. But in my own opinion – and Cicero is my witness: *The power of eloquence is the mistress of things ... It is she alone that makes us able to learn what we do not know and to teach others what we do know.*¹⁷⁸ Nobody knows better than I how useful eloquence could be to me, for I know many things and see them in my mind¹⁷⁹, but I cannot explain them to you as well as I would since I am lacking in that which alone has the power to bestow the gift of speaking.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Demosthenes (384-322 BC: Greek statesman

¹⁷⁷ This speech was considered by Renaissance humanists to be a classical masterpiece of rhetorics

¹⁷⁸ Cicero, *De natura deorum*, 2, 59, 148

¹⁷⁹ "mentis luminibus": "by the lights of my mind"

¹⁸⁰ "orandi et exorandi"

[7] At¹⁸¹ tu, Deus, oro, *qui*¹⁸² *templa caeli summa sonitu concutis*, qui genus humanum benigne curas, qui **et**¹⁸³ hoc congregare concilium¹⁸⁴ voluisti et rem Graecam in medium adduxisti, jam mihi et recte consulendi facultatem et his bene atque utiliter deliberandi mentem concedito. Tuum est hoc negotium, tuaque sunt¹⁸⁵ opera. In te omnium sita spes, in te conversi omnium oculi sunt. Neque putamus tuam nobis opem¹⁸⁶ negari, quam nemo petens umquam¹⁸⁷ non impetravit. Quod nisi putassem, numquam hodie huc loci ratiocinaturus accessissem. Spero enim, patres humanissimi¹⁸⁸, et daturum mihi Deum, quod loquar, cum de suis rebus agatur, et vestras mentes **ad**¹⁸⁹ partem per eum flecti ducique me- {2r} liorem. Sed jam quid mea velit oratio in medium proferamus¹⁹⁰.

¹⁸¹ *margin note:* Invocatio A

¹⁸² per V

¹⁸³ etiam V, Z

¹⁸⁴ congregare concilium : concilium congregare L, M

¹⁸⁵ tuaque sunt: quae fiunt V

¹⁸⁶ nobis opem : opem nobis O

¹⁸⁷ numquam O

¹⁸⁸ patres humanissimi *omit.* O

¹⁸⁹ in V, Z

¹⁹⁰ proferam Z

[7] But you, oh God, *whose thunder shakes the highest realms of heaven*,¹⁹¹ who benevolently takes care of the human race, who has wanted to gather this Council, and who has caused us to deal with the matter of the Greeks¹⁹², I ask you: grant me the ability to give good counsel and inspire this assembly to discuss the matter profitably and constructively. For this matter is yours, this work is yours. All our hope is in you; all our eyes are on you. And we believe that we can trust in your assistance, for anyone who has ever asked your help has received it. If I did not think so, I would never have come here today to present my views. For I hope, kind Fathers, that God will let me know what to say in his own cause, and that he will bend and lead your minds towards the best solution. But let us now proceed to the subject of my speech.

¹⁹¹ Terentius, *Eunuch*, 590. Quoted after the Loeb edition of 1994

¹⁹² I.e. the project of reunification of the Greek and the Roman (Latin) Church

[8] Tempus¹⁹³, ut scitis, prope est, quo de reductione Graecorum naviumque missione agendum a vobis¹⁹⁴ est. Et quoniam multae illis pecuniae sunt promissae, quibus et duci possint et ali, nonnulli a vobis excogitati sunt modi, quibus hanc summam possetis in tempore¹⁹⁵ habere paratam. Nullam tamen expeditiorem viam censuistis, quam ex loco pecunias quaerere, ubi futurum esset concilium. Ut si qui essent, qui sanctam hanc Synodum in suis terris¹⁹⁶ habere cuperent, mutuam hanc summam concederent. Misistis, qui diversorum principum ac¹⁹⁷ communitatum animos persentirent. Hinc illa Venetorum oblatio nec vobis nec illo¹⁹⁸ illustri¹⁹⁹ dominio²⁰⁰ indigna. Hinc Florentinorum promissiones ab exuberanti quadam magnificentia procedentes. Hinc Avinionensis²⁰¹ populi non magna solum, sed amplissima pollicitatio, quae illam urbem non minus fidelem quam devotam ecclesiae filiam manifestat. Hinc principis **potentissimi**²⁰² Filippi Mariae ducis Mediolani mirifica regalisque concessio, cui semper²⁰³ animo fuit nec vestris deesse mandatis, nec petitionibus adversari. Hinc aliorum neque viles neque contemnendae sponsiones. Hinc jam certi estis ea servare Graecis posse, quae vestra decreta decantant.

¹⁹³ *margin note:* Narratio A

¹⁹⁴ agendum a vobis : a vobis agendum L, M

¹⁹⁵ possetis in tempore : in tempore possetis L, M

¹⁹⁶ suis terris : terris suis L, M

¹⁹⁷ et Z

¹⁹⁸ illi C

¹⁹⁹ illari V

²⁰⁰ domino N, O, R

²⁰¹ Avinionensi D, L; Avenionensis M; Ammonensis V

²⁰² atque invictissimi *add.* O, V, Z

²⁰³ in *add.* B, R

0.2. Preparations for Greek participation in a Union Council

[8] The time approaches when you will have to act in the matter of reunion with the Greeks and the sending of ships. As great sums have been promised them for their transport and provisions, you have been considering various ways of having the money ready in time. You have decided that the best way is to ask for money from the city where the Council shall be held, so that those who want to have this Holy Synod on their territory would have to lend you the necessary funds. You have sent envoys to explore the minds of various Princes and city-states. So, you now have an offer from Venice, worthy both of you and of that illustrious realm. You also have magnificent promises from Florence²⁰⁴. And you have an offer from the people of Avignon²⁰⁵ that is not just large, it is extremely generous, and it shows that this city is both a devoted and faithful daughter of the Church. You have also received a magnificent and Princely offer from the mighty Prince Filippo Maria, Duke of Milan²⁰⁶, who has always wished to obey your decrees and grant your petitions. And finally you have generous and impressive offers from a number of other parties. So, you now have certainty that you can provide the Greeks with the assistance you have decreed.

²⁰⁴ Florence (Firenze): capital city of Tuscany. Often at war with Milan

²⁰⁵ Avignon: city in Southeastern France. Seat of the papacy from 1309 – 1378

²⁰⁶ Filippo Maria Visconti (b. 1392, Duke 1412, d. 1447): Duke of Milan

[9] Socratis tamen verba non absurde vobis **insinuaverim**^{207 208}, qui cum videret hominem divitiis affluentem eaque de causa fastidio quodam²⁰⁹ gloriabundum: *Non prius te*, inquit²¹⁰, *admirabor, quam notum mihi*²¹¹ *fuert, quo pacto scias uti fortunis tuis*. Magno nempe atque admirabili immortalis Dei beneficio usi estis, qui ea²¹² vobis facilia fecerit, quae non solum difficilia, sed impossibilia videbantur. Ob **quam**²¹³ rem magnas habendas Deo²¹⁴ gratias censeo, qui talem de vobis curam gesserit, qui naviculam suam ex altissimis²¹⁵ fluctibus ad portum salutis eduxit²¹⁶, ut navigare deinceps in portu videamini.

²⁰⁷ vobis insinuaverim : insinuaverim vobis O

²⁰⁸ insinuerim V, Z

²⁰⁹ omit. L, M

²¹⁰ te inquit : inquit te L, M

²¹¹ notum mihi : mihi notum L, M

²¹² omit. N

²¹³ hanc V, Z

²¹⁴ habendas deo : habentes deo C; deo habendas L, M

²¹⁵ altis N

²¹⁶ deduxit M

[9] However, I think it is appropriate to remind you of something Socrates²¹⁷ once said when he saw a man who was rich and proud of it: *I shall not admire you before I know how you use your fortune*. For immortal God has made those things easy for you which appeared to be not just difficult, but impossible, and until now you have used this great and wonderful gift well. We owe great thanks to God who has taken such care of you and who has brought his ship²¹⁸ from the stormy sea into a safe harbour so that you now seem to be sailing calmly within the harbour itself.

²¹⁷ Socrates (c. 469-399 BC): Greek philosopher

²¹⁸ Metaphor for the Church

[10] Quod quamquam ita est, non tamen dimittendum esse clavum arbitror, neque abiciendam²¹⁹ gubernaculi curam. Vidimus enim saepe nautas cum summo gaudio atque ingenti laetitia portum suscepisse, et in ipso seu magistri negligentia, seu²²⁰ maris²²¹ violentia fecisse naufragium. Quocirca etsi vobis²²² paene in tuto²²³ res est, nolite tamen clausis oculis ad ea, quae restant, accedere. Adhuc enim vitandi sunt scopuli, adhuc praevidenda tempestas et cavenda est nobis²²⁴. Neque enim quocumque pergitis tutum est, sed in ipsa electione²²⁵ difficultas laborque versatur²²⁶, ut si bene eligatis, bene succedat; si male, eveniat male.

[11] De huiusmodi ergo electione loquendum mihi statui, cujus, {2v} ut opinor, verba minime contemnetis. Nec quis dicat, sed quae dicantur, trutinabitis. Notam siquidem vobis illam Ciceronis *De natura Deorum* sententiam puto, qui ait: *non tam auctores in disputando quam rationis momenta quaerenda esse*. Quod si quid inepte dixero, repudiate, si quid cum ratione attulero, suscipite. Atque utinam²²⁷ ea vobis²²⁸ modo convenirent²²⁹, quae apud Sallustium Caesar in consulendo requirit: *Omnes homines, inquit ille, patres conscripti, qui de rebus dubiis consultant, ab odio, amicitia, ira atque misericordia vacuos esse decet*.

²¹⁹ abjiciendam D, L, M

²²⁰ sed C

²²¹ navis V

²²² nobis D, L, M

²²³ toto R

²²⁴ vobis V

²²⁵ omit. O

²²⁶ vertitur B, R

²²⁷ ut N

²²⁸ nobis L, M, N

²²⁹ conveniret R

0.3. The choice of venue for the Council

[10] Still, it is too early to detach the rudder and stop caring about the steering wheel. For often we have seen seamen enter a port, joyful and jubilant, only to be shipwrecked inside the port itself²³⁰ because of the captain's inattention or the violent sea. Therefore, though the matter is almost safely concluded: do not approach what remains to be done with your eyes shut. For there are still cliffs to be avoided, and you must still be on guard against storms. Not all directions are safe for you. Choosing a venue for the Council is fraught with difficulty and trouble: you will have success if you make a good choice and fiasco if you make a bad one.

0.4. The impartiality of the Council

[11] I shall be speaking of this choice, and I believe that you will not spurn my words. Do not consider who is saying them, but what is being said. I presume that you know the sentence from Cicero's²³¹ *De Natura Deorum*²³² to the effect that *in a discussion you should not consider the debaters, but their arguments.*²³³ So, if I say something that is inept, then reject it, and if I say something that is reasonable, then accept it. And may that apply to us which Caesar²³⁴, according to Sallust²³⁵, said when speaking of what is required in deliberations: *Conscript Fathers*²³⁶, *all men who deliberate upon difficult questions ought to be free of hatred and friendship, anger and pity.*²³⁷

²³⁰ Seneca: *Epistolae morales ad Lucilium*, 2, 14, 15: *Perit aliqua navis in portu*

²³¹ Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC): Roman statesman

²³² Cicero, *De natura deorum* (c. 45 BC). Book on the theology of various schools in antiquity.

²³³ Cicero: *De natura deorum*, 1, 5, 10: *Non enim tam auctoritatis in disputando quam rationis momenta quaerenda sunt*. Note that Piccolomini uses "auctores" instead of Cicero's "auctoritatis". Quoted after the Loeb edition of 1961

²³⁴ Gaius Julius Caesar (100– 44 BC): Roman general and statesman

²³⁵ Gaius Sallustius Crispus (86–34 BC): Roman historian

²³⁶ Conscript fathers: the senators of ancient Rome. When a group of new senators were first enrolled with the "fathers", the body was called *Patres et Conscripti*; afterwards all were called *Patres conscripti*. [1913 Webster]

²³⁷ Sallust, *De conjuratione Catilinae*, 51, 1. Quoted after the Loeb edition of 1924

[12] Quod si modo²³⁸ cernerem, nihil²³⁹ mali suspicarer. **Nec**²⁴⁰ enim loquens aliquis ducalem aut Venetum aut Florentinum se jactitaret, sed conciliarem, sed *mundanum*, ut inquit Socrates, sese exhiberet²⁴¹, cunctaque ad utilitatem concilii mundique commoda referret²⁴², nec suae affectioni²⁴³ publicam postponeret utilitatem. Hinc²⁴⁴ namque, ni fallor, totius Christianitatis salus dependet, ut si locus aptus eligatur²⁴⁵, et Argolicis erroribus mederi et multis latinae linguae deformitatibus providere possitis. Quod si dubium insecureque acceptare contingat, **dissipetur**²⁴⁶ concilium²⁴⁷, et praelati in praedam ultionemque **dentur**²⁴⁸, quod sine magno Christiani populi malo fieri non potest. Hic igitur aperiendi sunt oculi, hic summis digitis suspendendae oculorum palpebrae, ne quid perperam aut temere incipiatis. Sed imitemini sapientem, *cujus proprium*²⁴⁹ est, ut a Cicerone dicitur²⁵⁰, *nihil facere quod poenitere possit*.

²³⁸ *omit.* L, M; haec N

²³⁹ nil O

²⁴⁰ Hec R; Neque V, Z

²⁴¹ exuberet B, R

²⁴² referet R, V

²⁴³ factioni B, R

²⁴⁴ habere V

²⁴⁵ deligatur M

²⁴⁶ dissipabitur V, Z

²⁴⁷ Christiani populi *add.* O

²⁴⁸ dabuntur V, Z

²⁴⁹ principium V

²⁵⁰ dicitur R

[12] If I perceive such sentiments now, I do not consider them to be of malicious intent, but I do think that no speaker should present himself as a the Duke's man²⁵¹ or a man of Venice or of Florence, but rather as the Council's man or as *a man of the World*, as Socrates says²⁵². Everything should be considered in terms of its usefulness to the Council or its benefit to the world, and nobody should prefer private interests to the common good. Unless I am mistaken, the very salvation of all Christianity depends on this, and if you choose a suitable venue for the Council, you can remedy the Argolian²⁵³ errors and many deformations of the Latin language. But if you choose a dubious and unsafe location, then the Council will be dispersed and the prelates subjected to plunder and revenge – to the great detriment of the Christian people. So you must open your eyes and with your fingertips keep your eyelids apart so that you do not embark upon a reckless and risky course. Let us imitate the wise man whose nature it is – as Cicero says – *to do nothing of which he may repent*.²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ i.e. of Milan

²⁵² "mundanus": Socrates as quoted by Plutarch, *On Exile* in *Moralia*: "... the saying of Socrates is still better, that he was no Athenian or a Greek, but a "cosmian" (as one might say Rhodian or Corinthian), because he did not shun himself up with Sunium or Taenarus and the Ceraunian mountains." Quoted from the Loeb edition of 1959, vol. 7, p. 529. Cicero refers to this saying in *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 5, 37, 108, where Piccolomini may have picked it up

²⁵³ i.e. Greek

²⁵⁴ Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 5, 28, 81. Quoted from the Loeb edition of 1927

[13] Fingamus igitur concilii personam, et quid illam facere deceat examinemus. Eam si cujatem²⁵⁵ se dicat interrogas, neque Italicam, neque²⁵⁶ Gallicam, neque Germanicam aut Hispanicam se vocitabit, sed Christianam²⁵⁷ asseverabit, solumque illud se quaerere dicet, quod nomini²⁵⁸ Christiano conducat. Hujus erit sentes ex agro dominico, idest haereses eradicare, mores reformare **pacemque**²⁵⁹ ubique statuere²⁶⁰. Cavebit ne quid agat injuste, praeceptumque illud **Pythagoricum**²⁶¹ observabit²⁶², quo praecipit²⁶³, *jugum stateramque ne **transcendere***²⁶⁴; studebit²⁶⁵ ne adversus quempiam reperiatur ingrata, in libertate se bene vivendi et recta statuendi conservabit. Delinquentes non ita²⁶⁶ ad desperationem persequetur, neque ita patietur, ut provocet. Deponite igitur²⁶⁷ haec nationum nomina, patres. Exuite quisque provinciarum affectiones et in medium consulite, quid huic concilio et quid²⁶⁸ fidei Christianae credatis expedire, eoque vela tendamus, quo melius res geri verisimilius existimatis²⁶⁹.

[14] Multa de ForoJulii²⁷⁰ ubertate, Venetorumque potentia ac magnificentia Simon Venetus peroravit ac meo iudicio non minus vere quam eleganter. De Florentinorum vero commoditatibus Gaspar explicuit. De urbe **vero**²⁷¹ Avinionensi²⁷² pulcherrima atque optima et hujus sacri concilii devotissima Raymundum {3r} bellissime perorantem accepistis. Atque, ut existimo²⁷³, nihil est ab eis praetermissum, quod trahere concilium ad eorum valeat civitates.

²⁵⁵ omit. O

²⁵⁶ aut O, Z

²⁵⁷ se add. L, M

²⁵⁸ more V

²⁵⁹ pacem B, N, O, R, V, Z

²⁶⁰ omit. O

²⁶¹ Pictagoricum N; Pictagoricum V, Z

²⁶² conservabit D, L, M

²⁶³ praecepit L, M

²⁶⁴ transcendas V, Z; transcendere L; trascende M

²⁶⁵ studebis V

²⁶⁶ non ita : vero V

²⁶⁷ ergo C, N

²⁶⁸ quod Z

²⁶⁹ estimatis O, Z; extimetis V

²⁷⁰ Fori-Julii M; Forlivii O

²⁷¹ illa add. B, D, L, M, N, O, R, Z; illa V

²⁷² Ammonensi V

²⁷³ estimo Z [A corrects existimo for estimo]; extimo V

[13] Let us imagine that the Council is a person and consider what she would do. If you ask her where she is from, then she will call herself neither Italian, nor French, German or Spanish, but she will insist that she is Christian and that she only desires what may benefit the Christian name²⁷⁴. Her task will be to remove the thorns from the field of the Lord, that is: to eradicate heresy, to reform morals, and to restore peace everywhere. She will take care not to act unjustly, and she will observe the precept of Pythagoras²⁷⁵: *Step not beyond the beam of balance!*²⁷⁶ She will take pains not to appear ungrateful to anybody²⁷⁷. She will preserve her liberty to live morally and to make the right decisions. She will not pursue delinquents to the point where they become desperate, nor tolerate them to the point of encouraging them. So, fathers, let us put aside the names of nations, let everyone free himself of local patriotism, let us focus instead on what may serve this Council and the Christian faith²⁷⁸, and let us set sail in the direction which is the most likely to advance our cause.

[14] Simone of Venice has said much about the fertile region of Friuli²⁷⁹ and the power and magnificence of Venice, and I think that he has spoken both truthfully and elegantly. Gaspare has explained to us the advantages of Florence. And you have heard Raimondo speaking gracefully about that beautiful and splendid city of Avignon, a city entirely devoted to this Holy Council. In my opinion, these speakers have advanced all the possible arguments for transferring the Council to their respective cities.

²⁷⁴ i.e. cause

²⁷⁵ Pythagoras (c. 570-c. 495 BC): Greek philosopher and mathematician

²⁷⁶ *Me zygon*, in the sense: Do no injustice. Symbol nr 14. Symbols of Pythagoras (recorded by Iamblichus of Chalcis), 1905, p. 65. Quoted from Guarnerio Veronese's translation from Greek into Latin of Plutarch's *De Liberis educandis*, p. 7: Jugum stateramque non transcendere.

²⁷⁷ Here Piccolomini prepares a later argument that it would be ungrateful of the Council not to accept the Duke of Milan's offer of Pavia

²⁷⁸ Piccolomini speaks for a broad, international, i.e. European, approach to solving the problems posed by the negotiations with the Greeks. In this context, the international argument is being used to undermine the position of those speakers who had pointed to their own cities as seat of the Council. On the one hand, the argument certainly had merit in itself, but on the other hand Piccolomini's clear ambition to secure an Italian venue for the Council or, if possible, even a Siennese one makes his argument sound disingenuous

²⁷⁹ Friuli: region in North-Eastern Italy. Its capital city, Udine, was proposed by Venice as venue for the Council

[15] De duce vero Mediolani, quamvis multa²⁸⁰ Isidorus, orator vester diligentissimus, **explicaverit**²⁸¹, neque **sufficenter**²⁸² mea sententia dictum videtur, neque admiratione dignum est, si ducales oratores, viri gravissimi, episcopus albiganensis²⁸³ ac Christophorus de Velate²⁸⁴, cetera subticuerunt. Satis namque²⁸⁵ duxerunt ad illum²⁸⁶ principem pertinere, si requisitus responderit, si petita concesserit, si se ipsum et quidquid habet obtulerit. Locorum vero comparisonem facere vestrum esse dixerunt²⁸⁷. Certi enim sunt illum ducem, quidquid eligatis, contentum²⁸⁸ fore, cupere tamen, ut bene vobis concilioque²⁸⁹ succedat²⁹⁰.

[16] Vestrum esset²⁹¹ igitur, patres reverendissimi, ducalium terrarum investigare commoditates, quod onus, postquam alii rejiciunt, ego non minus vestra quam ducis causa suspicio²⁹², de Venetorum Florentinorumque terris omnino²⁹³ silens, quos adeo promptos paratosque in necessitatibus ecclesiae comperitis²⁹⁴, ut laudare ipsos et amplissimis commendare **testimoniis**²⁹⁵ teneamini.

²⁸⁰ *omit.* C

²⁸¹ explicavit O, V, Z

²⁸² neque convenienter *add.* V, Z

²⁸³ Albinganensis C

²⁸⁴ Valet R; Villate V; Vallate Z

²⁸⁵ Satis namque : satisque C

²⁸⁶ *omit.* O

²⁸⁷ duxerim V

²⁸⁸ contemptum B, R

²⁸⁹ consilioque C; quocumque Z (not V:proves that V does not derive from Z)

²⁹⁰ suscedat V

²⁹¹ erat V

²⁹² suspicio C

²⁹³ oratio V

²⁹⁴ comperietis V

²⁹⁵ laudibus O; praeconiis V, Z

0.5. The offer of the Duke of Milan

[15] As concerns the Duke of Milan, your diligent envoy, Isidoro, had much to say. But in my opinion, he did not say enough, and it is not very impressive that the Duke's own ambassadors, the Bishop of Albenga²⁹⁶ and Cristoforo da Velate, both serious men, remained silent about the rest. For they considered it would be sufficient if the Prince responded to the solicitations of the Council, if he granted its petitions, and if he offered himself and his possessions to it. As for the comparison of the various locations, they said that this is your business, and they are sure that the Duke will be content with whatever choice you make and that his only desire is for you and the Council to be successful.

[16] So, it is your own responsibility, Reverend Fathers, to assess the advantages of the ducal territories. Since the others²⁹⁷ do not assume this charge, I shall take it on both for your sakes and for the Duke's. I shall say nothing about the territories of Venice and Florence: you have already heard how eager and ready they are to provide what the Church needs, and we must praise them and commend them in grateful testimonials.

²⁹⁶ Matteo del Carretto: Bishop of Albenga in Liguria from 1429 to 1448. Cf. Pius II: *Orationes*, p. 37, n. 17

²⁹⁷ i.e. the envoys of the Council and of the Duke

[17] De oblatione ducali pergo discutere, quae meo iudicio nulli est inferior, et quae, si verum fateri volumus, omnium est aliarum²⁹⁸ causa nobisque²⁹⁹ ad optimam optionem³⁰⁰ permaxime necessaria. Hujus enim oblationis³⁰¹ locus unus³⁰² est, nisi³⁰³ fallor, ubi ex sententia terminari res³⁰⁴ possit. Et ut quod dicimus luce clarius ostendamus³⁰⁵, **quae³⁰⁶ requirat bona electio inquirendum est. Ea³⁰⁷ licet alii³⁰⁸ multifariam diviserint, mihi tamen quattuor³⁰⁹ dumtaxat desideranda videntur, quorum si aliquod desit, recte eligere nullatenus³¹⁰ valeamus. Illis autem concurrentibus nihil periculi sit, acceptareque sine controversia³¹¹ debeamus³¹², quicumque³¹³ loca³¹⁴ illa concedat. Ea sunt, ut locum eligatis, in quo Graecis satisfacere possitis; ut commode papa cum concilio convenire queat; ut domus victualiaque suppetant; ut securitatem libertatemque in³¹⁵ loco habeatis electo. Quae omnia, si **quis³¹⁶** sine passione consideret³¹⁷, in urbe Papiensi ducalique territorio suscipiet³¹⁸.**

²⁹⁸ alia O

²⁹⁹ nobis O

³⁰⁰ optationem Z

³⁰¹ oblationibus R

³⁰² locus unus : unus locus O

³⁰³ ni M

³⁰⁴ terminari res : res terminari O

³⁰⁵ condamus N

³⁰⁶ quas res V

³⁰⁷ quae ... ea : quas res boni loci exigit electio trutinemus, quas O, V (with tintinemus instead of trutinemus), Z

³⁰⁸ alia B, R

³⁰⁹ mihi tamen quattuor : tamen quattuor mihi O, V, Z

³¹⁰ nullatenus D, O

³¹¹ locum *add.* B, C, D, N, R

³¹² debemus V, Z

³¹³ quemcumque Z

³¹⁴ locum A, V; *omit.* B, C, D, L, M, N, O

³¹⁵ *omit.* C

³¹⁶ recte si quis *add.* O, V, Z

³¹⁷ considerat V

³¹⁸ suscipiet B, R

0.6. Four criteria for choosing the venue of the Council

[17] I now proceed to discuss the Duke's offer, which – as I see it - is in no way inferior to the other offers made. In some way, it is actually their cause³¹⁹, and we must consider it, so that we can make the best choice. Unless I am mistaken, the venue offered by the Duke³²⁰ is definitely a place where our matter may be brought to the desired conclusion.

To explain more clearly what I am saying, I shall now examine the criteria for a good choice. Others have established a comprehensive set of such criteria, but personally I think that only four things are required: if just one of them is missing, the venue in question is unsuitable, but if they are all met, there is no risk, and we can, without controversy, accept the offer no matter who made it.

The criteria for a suitable venue are

- * that it is acceptable to the Greeks;
- * that it is convenient for the Pope's meeting with the Council;
- * that accomodation and provisions are available;
- * and that there is safety and independence.

If one considers the matter dispassionately, all these conditions are met in the city of Pavia and in the Duke's lands.

³¹⁹ The offer made by the Duke of Milan may have provoked the other North Italian states to make similar offers out of fear or general rivalry

³²⁰ Pavia

[18] Prioremque rem, si placet, examinemus, cuius tria sunt membra: ut locus in decreto aut nominetur aut comprehendatur; ut pecuniae necessariae praesto sint; ut triariae grossae subtilesque habeantur trecentique arcitenentes, sive, ut vos dicere soletis, balistarii.

[19] Contineri vero Papiam in decreto nemo ambigit, cum omnes fere **Italiae**³²¹ urbes sint eligibiles, nisi quas Graeci expresse³²² repudiarunt. Atque, ut clarius disseramus **difficultatem istam**³²³ locorum, nonnisi Graecorum causa facimus, ut illum eligamus locum, quem repudiare Graeci non debeant. Sed ipsi jam terras ducis suis litteris petiverunt³²⁴. Ergo nil³²⁵ est cur Papiam in hac parte contemnamus: Graecisque debemus non parum auscultare

³²¹ Italicae V, Z

³²² expressi D, L

³²³ difficultatem istam : difficultates istas V, Z

³²⁴ petierunt L, M

³²⁵ nihil L, M

1. Pavia is acceptable to the Greeks

[18] Let us now examine the first requirement. It consists of three parts:

- * the location must be mentioned in or covered by the decree³²⁶;
- * the necessary funds must be available;
- * large and light triremes³²⁷ must be available as well as 300 archers (you usually use the term *balistarii*).³²⁸

1.1. Pavia is covered by the decree of the Council

[19] Nobody doubts that Pavia is covered by the decree since all Italian cities are eligible except those that have been expressly rejected by the Greeks - so Pavia is obviously covered by the decree. To make things quite clear: if we want to respect the interests of the Greeks, we must choose a location which they cannot reject³²⁹. But the Greeks themselves have already asked in writing for the territories of the Duke of Milan so in this respect there is absolutely no reason for us to reject Pavia; we really do owe it to the Greeks to listen to them attentively.

³²⁶ I.e. the decree of the Council, *Sicut pia mater*, of September 7, 1434

³²⁷ Trireme: a galley, developed by the ancient Greeks as a warship, with three banks of oars on each side

³²⁸ In a letter to Siena of 25 October 1436, Piccolomini uses the same expression: *trecentosque arcitenentes sive, ut ajunt, balistarios* (Piccolomini: *Epistolarium*, letter 22)

³²⁹ The meaning of the Latin text is somewhat unclear

[20] neque {3v} enim sine ratione moventur, scientes ducem cum **Turcis**³³⁰, unde vetustissimam trahit originem, haereditariam³³¹ habere familiaritatem, quod salva fide vituperari non potest. Idcirco timens Romeorum imperator ne se absente Constantinopolim Turci obsideant, credit ducem unis litteris periculo obviaturum, si Turcorum³³² principi scripserit, Graecos non alia quam fidei causa Italiam petisse³³³, de qua ille salvo imperio non curat, crederetque duci ista scribenti, aliis forte non item, a quibus tamquam hostibus dari sibi verba³³⁴ existimaret, et se dolis **circumventum**³³⁵ opinaretur. Nec illud est non considerandum: Graecos³³⁶ fere omnes imperio Turcorum³³⁷ esse subjectos, curareque ne quam rebellionis suspicionem ingerant dominis, a quibus profecto **impedirentur**³³⁸. Nec invitis Turcis deducere Graecos quisquam poterit.

³³⁰ Teucr- *et passim* O; Thurc- *et passim* R; Trojanis V, Z

³³¹ unde ... haereditariam *omit.* R [this omission may be intentional as the statement is false and preposterous, and had even become unpolitical]

³³² Theucrorum V

³³³ petiisse M

³³⁴ dari sibi verba : sibi verba dari L, M

³³⁵ circumventam V, Z

³³⁶ Graecorum O

³³⁷ Teucros O

³³⁸ impediretur O, V, Z

1.1.1. The attitude of the Turks

[20] They are in fact acting with good reason since they know that the Duke is a descendant of the Turks³³⁹ of old³⁴⁰. Thus, he is related to them by a hereditary bond which cannot in good faith be disclaimed. The Byzantine³⁴¹ Emperor³⁴² fears that the Turks will lay siege to Constantinople in his absence³⁴³, but because of that relationship he thinks that the Duke may remove the risk by writing a letter to the Prince of the Turks stating that the Greeks would be coming to Italy purely for the sake of the faith. As long as his own power is not in question, the Turk is indifferent to the matter of the Christian faith, and he would believe the Duke writing to him to this effect. Others the Turk would not believe as he would consider their words as coming from enemies and think that he was being deceived. It must also be kept in mind that almost all Greeks are subject to the power of the Turks, and we therefore have to take pains to avoid a situation where their overlords might suspect a revolt and prevent their departure. For indeed, no one can bring over the Greeks if the Turks will not let them.

³³⁹ Interestingly, in this very early text Piccolomini follows the thesis that the Turks originate from the Trojans, a thesis that he later vehemently – and correctly – refutes, cf. Pius II: *Orationes*, I, p. 269, and Helmuth, p. 106-107. Though he does so in later orations, here he does not use the term “teucris”, a classical term for the people living around Troy, used also by Virgil in that famous passage: *Ego ne credite, Teucri. Quidquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentes* (*Men of Troy, trust not the horse. Whatever it be, I fear the Greeks, even when bringing gifts*). Virgil, *Aeneid*, 2, 48-49.

³⁴⁰ In the style of the times, a classical genealogy had been constructed for the house of the Visconti, making them the descendants of the Trojans. Piccolomini probably knew about this genealogy from Andrea Biglia, cf. above section 4.4.1. If both the contemporary Turks and the Visconti descended from the Trojans (Turks of old), they are related through their common forefathers, and Piccolomini therefore claims that this family bond will make the Turks trust the Visconti Duke. The claim is, of course, completely preposterous, and it is doubtful that any educated person in the assembly would have believed it all. Cf. Pius II: *Orationes*, p. 36, n.8

³⁴¹ “romeorum”

³⁴² Johannes VIII Palaiologos (b. 1392, e. 1425, d. 1448): Second last Greek Roman emperor

³⁴³ As well he might in view of the expansionist policies of the Turks and their former attacks on Constantinople

[21] Magnum est imperium Turcorum, ingentes Asiaticorum vires, et opes ipsae florentissimae, qui ex Asia in Europam imperium prorogarunt³⁴⁴ totamque Graeciam occuparunt³⁴⁵ tamquam Troianae **ultores**³⁴⁶ ruinae, quos Graecia pellere non unius civitatis aut domini, sed totius esset Christianitatis opus. Non vis, sed gratia³⁴⁷ Graecos det nobis³⁴⁸ oportet. Ferunt Turci, ut de fide ut lubet³⁴⁹ Argolici sentiant, ideoque fidei causa patientur ad concilium proficisci, si nihil contra se machinari, nullasque ordiri sibi fraudes suspicentur. Ad fugiendas ergo suspiciones ducis³⁵⁰ efflagitant urbes, quem³⁵¹ sibi nullo pacto suspectum Turci arbitrentur. Nec Constantinopolitanos invito Turco venire posse negaverim, sed aliorum etiam habenda est³⁵² ratio parentium Turcis³⁵³, quos secum trahendos patriarcha confidit. Quo fit, ut Graecorum³⁵⁴ causa Papia sit maxime accommoda.

³⁴⁴ prorogavit V

³⁴⁵ occupavit V

³⁴⁶ **occultores A; ultores B, C, N, O, R, V, Z; cultores D, L, M**

³⁴⁷ Grecia N

³⁴⁸ Graecos det nobis : det nobis Graecos L, M

³⁴⁹ *omit.* V; libet Z

³⁵⁰ Mediolani *add.* V; Mediolani Z

³⁵¹ quas V

³⁵² etiam habenda est : habenda est etiam O

³⁵³ parentium Turcis *omit.* V [proves that Z does not derive from V]

³⁵⁴ certorum Z

[21] For great is the realm of the Turks³⁵⁵, immense is the power of the Asiatics and enormous their riches. They have extended their Empire from Asia³⁵⁶ to Europe³⁵⁷, and they have occupied the whole of Greece as if they were the avengers of the destruction of Troy. To expel them from Greece would not be the task of a single city or state, but of the entire Christian world³⁵⁸. By necessity, it is not force, but favour that will give us the Greeks. The Turks tolerate that the Argolians³⁵⁹ have whatever religious beliefs they want. Therefore, they will allow them go to the Council in a religious matter, but only if they do not suspect any deception or intrigues³⁶⁰. In order to allay their suspicions, the Greeks ask for the cities of the Duke whom they think will in no way be suspicious to the Turks. I do not deny that the Constantinopolitans would be able to come against the will of the Turks, but we must also take into account the other people³⁶¹ who are subjects of the Turk, and whom the Patriarch³⁶² wants to bring with him. In conclusion, as far as the Greeks are concerned, Pavia is a most appropriate choice.

³⁵⁵ i.e. the Ottoman Turks whose rulers eventually conquered the entire Byzantine Empire and a large part of the Mediterranean world and became a serious threat to Europe

³⁵⁶ i.e. Asia Minor

³⁵⁷ Note the use of the term "Europe" as a geopolitical term

³⁵⁸ This passage is an early expression of what would be a lifelong and major concern of Piccolomini/Pius: the war and crusade against the Turks to save Europe and Christianity

³⁵⁹ i.e. the Greeks

³⁶⁰ This view is completely naïve: the Constantinopolitans wanted Church Union with the Latins not for theological reasons, but in order to obtain financial and military help in the losing battle against Turkish expansion. The Turks would have been aware of this fact, so it is quite surprising that they eventually allowed the Greeks under their control to accompany the emperor and the patriarch to the Council

³⁶¹ Greek theologians and bishops from those areas outside of Constantinople that had already been conquered by the Turks

³⁶² Joseph II (b. 1360, p. 1416, d.1439): Patriarch of Constantinople

[22] Nonnulli tamen ad terras, inquiunt, si ducis eatur, non permissuros Venetos Graecis transitum Genuensesque obstaturos³⁶³ gannunt³⁶⁴, quod de florentibus illis civitatibus, duobus, ut ita dixerim, Christianitatis luminibus, nefas est non solum dicere, sed suspicari, quae solae nos ab orienti defendunt, quae barbaricos reprimunt impetus, quae terras³⁶⁵ Christianorum ab incursione tutantur infidelium³⁶⁶, quae³⁶⁷ plurimas non dico urbes, sed provincias in media Barbariae³⁶⁸ bello armisque tenent. Has ne igitur civitates, arma **assidue**³⁶⁹ pro fide gestantes, venientibus ad unionem Graecis putabimus obstaturas³⁷⁰? Nec bonus est qui ista dicit, neque prudens, qui illa credit.

[23] Ego tam³⁷¹ Venetos quam³⁷² Genuenses omnia porrecturos opinor auxilia, quibus rem hanc conficiatis, quocumque concilium transferatis. Nec³⁷³ de Venetis ambigo³⁷⁴, quorum salvum conductum habetis. Genuenses vero brevi se missuros³⁷⁵ dixere³⁷⁶. In- {4r} terim devotas et benevolentiae plenas miserunt epistolas vestris sese jussibus committentes, qui etiam magna classe, quando oporteret, huic se rei propriis cum corporibus exhiberent. Nihil itaque timeo obstaculi, nihil violentiae Graecis fieri, nisi Turci, ut jam praedixi, molesti sint. Christianorum vero neminem neque scio neque puto³⁷⁷ ita scelestum³⁷⁸, ita iniquum, ita bonorum omnium perversorem, ut huic se negotio opponat.

³⁶³ obstituros M

³⁶⁴ garriunt M, V; *omit.* O

³⁶⁵ terram Z

³⁶⁶ infideliumque D, L, M

³⁶⁷ *omit.* D, L, M

³⁶⁸ Barbaria L, M, R, Z

³⁶⁹ dietim O, V, Z

³⁷⁰ obstituras M

³⁷¹ *omit.* R

³⁷² tamquam R

³⁷³ Neque O

³⁷⁴ amgibo A; angibo N [D corrects ambigo for amgibo by erasure/overwriting]

³⁷⁵ se missuros : missuros se L, M

³⁷⁶ dixisse N

³⁷⁷ neque puto *omit.* R

³⁷⁸ scelestem V

1.1.2. The attitude of Genoa and Venice

[22] Some people claim, however, that if you go to the Duke's territories, the Venetians will forbid the Greeks to pass through their territory. They also murmur that the Genoese³⁷⁹ will oppose this choice. To say – nay even to think - thus about these flourishing Christian cities, two lights of Christendom, is a gross injustice. These two cities alone protect us from the East, they defend us against the attacks of the barbarians, they protect the lands of the Christians from the incursions of the infidels, and by military force they hold many cities and even provinces in the middle of Barbary³⁸⁰. Shall we really believe that these two cities, which are fighting continuously for the Faith, would hinder the travel of the Greeks to the Reunion Council? No good man claims this, and no sensible man believes it.

[23] For my own part, I am convinced that both Venice and Genoa will render any possible assistance to your enterprise wherever you decide to transfer the Council. As far as the Venetians are concerned, you have already received their safeconduct, and the Genovese will send theirs shortly. In the meantime they have sent devoted letters full of goodwill and commitment to your decisions. They also say that, when needed, they will make a large fleet as well as their own persons available to this cause. So, I do not fear that there will be any obstacles or that the Greeks will suffer any violence, unless the Turks make trouble, as I have already mentioned. I do not know or think that any Christian could be so wicked, so evil and so perversely opposed to everything that is good that he would obstruct this matter.

³⁷⁹ Genoa (Genova): capital city of Liguria. Merchant state during the Middle Age and traditional rival of Venice ... and Milan

³⁸⁰ Here used to designate the territories held by non-Christian rulers

[24] Et quoniam aliqua de propinquitate maris et itineris brevitatem etiam alii dixerunt, non ab re erit de hoc quoque me³⁸¹ pauca disputasse³⁸². Namque, ut arbitror utque scio, ex locis, qui hodie nominantur, nullus est Graecis quam Papia accessu facilius, nisi terrestre iter facturi sint, quo casu longe proximius habent Utinum. Mari autem venientes Papiam habent propiorem³⁸³, sive enim³⁸⁴ Utinum, sive Papiam postulent, Ravennae prius fretum secaturi³⁸⁵ sunt, quod non magis Papia³⁸⁶ quam Utino abest. Graecis vero³⁸⁷ Papiam petentibus ad Ravennam³⁸⁸ Padus occurrit flumen, ut nostis, ob suam amplitudinem et poetarum carminibus et historiarum³⁸⁹ scriptis illustre. Ex Pado in³⁹⁰ Ticinum ascendent, qui ad portas urbis navigium vectitabit.

³⁸¹ non C

³⁸² disputare Z

³⁸³ Propriorem O, Z; priorem V

³⁸⁴ omit. R

³⁸⁵ secuturi O

³⁸⁶ Papiam R

³⁸⁷ autem V

³⁸⁸ ad Ravennam omit. L, M [the omission may be intentional, as the information is incorrect]

³⁸⁹ historiam B, R

³⁹⁰ omit. V

1.1.3. Pavia's distance from the sea and the route via the Po

[24] Since others have talked about proximity to the sea and the short distance to be travelled, it will be appropriate if I, too, comment briefly on this matter. For I think and know that of those places which are being mentioned today none is easier for the Greeks to reach than Pavia³⁹¹ – unless they travel over land in which case Udine³⁹² is far closer. But if they arrive by sea, Pavia is the nearest. For whether they prefer Udine or Pavia, they must first cross over to Ravenna, which is not farther from Pavia than from Udine. If the Greeks travel to Pavia, they will encounter the River Po³⁹³ which, as you know, is famed for its size in the songs of poets and the writings of historians. From the Po they will travel up the Ticino River³⁹⁴ until their ship reaches the gates of the city of Pavia.

³⁹¹ Pavia: formerly capital of the Kingdom of the Lombards. At the time it was the second largest city in Lombardy, ca. 35 km. south of Milan. First seat of the preceeding Council of Pavia/Siena, 1423-1424

³⁹² Udine: is a city in northeastern Italy, in the middle of the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, between the Adriatic sea and the Alps

³⁹³ Po: the largest river in Northern Italy. The mss. A, B, C and D add that the Greeks will encounter the river Po at Ravenna (*ad Ravennam*) which would be downplaying the distance for the sake of the argument

³⁹⁴ Ticino: tributary of Po

[25] Portus vero Pisanus longe remotior est, Charybdim³⁹⁵ namque Scyllamque³⁹⁶, per quas dubius est transitus, evitantibus³⁹⁷ Graecis totus Sicaniae circuendus³⁹⁸ est orbis, cuius, si qua veteribus fides, non minus quingentis millibus passuum clauditur ambitus. Neque mihi ob hanc rem Florentinus quisquam³⁹⁹ succenseat, neque enim hoc ideo dico, quod illi amplissimae urbi memorabilique populo concilium auferre velim, cuius tanta erga concilium cognita est⁴⁰⁰ caritas, ut nullius magis stupeam oblationes, qui prima requisitione⁴⁰¹ tantam pecuniarum summam tam effuse promiserit⁴⁰², ut illius etiam⁴⁰³ populi majora in posterum sperare⁴⁰⁴ beneficia debeatis. Sed ne caeci omnino et rerum videamur⁴⁰⁵ ignari, hoc enim, quod dico, charta⁴⁰⁶ illa⁴⁰⁷ edocet, qua uti nautae consueverunt. Haec tamen semper ego parvifeci: iter namque duorum triumve⁴⁰⁸ dierum nulli⁴⁰⁹ dare aut auferre concilium debet.

³⁹⁵ Caribdim A, B, N, O, R; Carybdim D, L, M

³⁹⁶ Graecis *add.* A

³⁹⁷ civibus V

³⁹⁸ circumeundus M

³⁹⁹ quispiam L, M

⁴⁰⁰ cognita est : est cognita L, M

⁴⁰¹ requisitionem O

⁴⁰² promiserunt V, Z

⁴⁰³ et V

⁴⁰⁴ spectare Z [proves that V does not derive from Z]

⁴⁰⁵ videamini V

⁴⁰⁶ carta A, B, C, N, O, R, V, Z; cartha D

⁴⁰⁷ *omit.* N

⁴⁰⁸ terminare V

⁴⁰⁹ ulli Z

1.1.4. The alternative route south of Sicily and through Florentine territory

[25] The seaport Pisa⁴¹⁰ is much farther away, and if the Greeks were to take that route, they will want to avoid the Strait of Scylla and Charybdis⁴¹¹ through which the passage is unsafe. Therefore, they will sail all around Sicily⁴¹² whose circumference, if the ancients are to be believed, measures at least 500.000 *passus*⁴¹³. No Florentine needs to be angry with me on this score⁴¹⁴, for I do not point out this fact in order to rob their splendid city and famous people of the Council: their devotion to the Council is well-known and great, and they have made a truly remarkable offer. Already at the time of the first request from the Council, they promised such a large amount that you may hope for even greater boons from this people in the future.⁴¹⁵ But so that we may not appear to be completely blind and ignorant: what I am saying⁴¹⁶ is evident from the map commonly used by seamen⁴¹⁷. On the other hand, I do not attach great importance to this question as the Council should not be bestowed or taken away depending on whether the travel takes three or four days more.

⁴¹⁰ Pisa: coastal city in Tuscany

⁴¹¹ Scylla and Charybdis: two mythological sea monsters, which tradition placed on each side of the Messina strait

⁴¹² Sicily (Sicilia): largest Island of the Mediterranean

⁴¹³ Passus: Roman measure of distance, ca. 1.5 meter

⁴¹⁴ Piccolomini points out that if the Council were to be held in Florence, the Greeks would then have to take the longer sea route South of Sicily

⁴¹⁵ Does Piccolomini really believe this, or is he subtly dropping poison into the ears of the Council fathers?

⁴¹⁶ i.e. about the passage south of Sicily and to Pisa

⁴¹⁷ An interesting early reference to nautical charts, possibly a “portolano”

[26] Illud vero cavendum est, illudque prospiciendum, ne repudiari a Graecis locus possit. Nec ineleganter homo prudentissimus Gaspar dicebat: quae Graecis promisistis diligentissime adimplenda, qui **vel si**⁴¹⁸ unum iota diminutum **invenerint**⁴¹⁹, licitam se judicarent⁴²⁰ excusationem habere. Sed illud praecipue ponderat, ut pecuniae habeantur ac navigia, quas res utrum ex duce⁴²¹ obtinueritis, Isidorus ipse plenissime demonstravit: quo ex Mediolano reverso, **expedite**⁴²² quaeso, an diminutas habueritis {4v} responsiones, an aliquid non obtinueritis, an ulla in re difficilem principem experti fueritis? Quinque et octuaginta milia ducatorum⁴²³ mutuo flagitastis⁴²⁴, bono vultu, bonoque animo annuit; terras arcesque consignari vobis⁴²⁵ ⁴²⁶ **requiritis**⁴²⁷, nulla fit resistantia; **duas**⁴²⁸ de quadraginta domos sine pensione **petitis**⁴²⁹, concedit facile quod fuerat sine petitione facturus; taxationes domorum victualiumque **postulatis**⁴³⁰, respondet non minus grate quam **liberaliter**⁴³¹. Quidquid denique vultis, publico ille sollemnique chirographo⁴³² completurum se obligat. O regalem animum, o liberalem principem, o inauditam magnificentiam! Hic est quem requiris, Enni: *Amicus certus in re certa*⁴³³ *cernitur*⁴³⁴. Talis certe ducalis responsio fuit, ut nulla suppletione⁴³⁵ indiguerit, nullo adjumento, nulla rescriptione, cujus locum, si statim elegissetis, statim erant parata omnia. Utrum alii sic fecerint, vos videritis.

⁴¹⁸ vel si : si vel O, V, Z

⁴¹⁹ invenirent O, V, Z

⁴²⁰ indicarent L, M

⁴²¹ ex duce *omit.* O

⁴²² expedite N, V, Z

⁴²³ millia ducatorum : ducatorum milia O

⁴²⁴ flagitatis C

⁴²⁵ arcesque consignari vobis : vobis arcesque consignari L, M

⁴²⁶ consignari vobis : vobis consignari Z

⁴²⁷ requisivistis V, Z

⁴²⁸ decem O, V, Z

⁴²⁹ petivistis V, Z

⁴³⁰ postulastis V, Z

⁴³¹ libenter O, V

⁴³² cyrographo A, B, C, D, L, R; cirographo N

⁴³³ incerta M [NB: the proper quote!]

⁴³⁴ re incerta cernitur : certa cernitur re O

⁴³⁵ suppletore V

1.2. The necessary funds are available

[26] In any case, we must take great pains to avoid that the Greeks reject the venue for the Council. The wise Gaspare put it very appropriately: your promises to the Greeks must be fulfilled exactly - if they find that just one *iota* has been taken away, they will claim that they have a legitimate excuse⁴³⁶. It is crucial that they be provided with funds and ships. Both of these may be had from the Duke, as Isidoro⁴³⁷ has amply demonstrated. For were the offers that he brought back from Milan in any way reduced? Was there anything you did not get? Did the Prince make difficulties on any point whatsoever? You asked for a loan of 85.000 ducats⁴³⁸: he granted it with good grace. You required that certain territories and fortresses be consigned to you: there was no opposition. You asked for 38 houses free of charge: he gave it readily, and you would not even have had to ask for it! You demanded controls of the prices for lodging and victuals: he answered gracefully and generously. And finally he committed himself to confirm everything you wish in a public and solemn document. Oh, regal soul Oh, generous Prince! Oh, extraordinary munificence! This is the one you want, Ennius⁴³⁹: *When fortune is fickle the faithful friend is found.*⁴⁴⁰ Such was the Duke's reply that no supplementary information was needed, no corroboration, and no further correspondence. If you choose his place now, then all will be ready immediately. Consider whether others have done as much.

⁴³⁶ i.e. for not coming or for increasing their demands

⁴³⁷ Isidoro da Rosate

⁴³⁸ Ducat: gold coin. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ducat>

⁴³⁹ Quintus Ennius (c. 239 – c. 169 BC). <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ennius>

⁴⁴⁰ Johannes Vahlen, *Ennianae poesis reliquiae*. 1903. Fragment 210, p. 155. Quoted by Cicero, *Laelius de amicitia*, 17, 64, 8. Quoted from the Loeb edition of 1964

[27] Unumque, obsecro, hic advertite, an cautio subdifficilis, an gravia postulentur assignamenta. Non essem, Hercule, increpandus, si hunc principem nullam petere cautionem dixerim. Huiusmodi enim quae petitur cautio, non est cautio, sed magis appellanda⁴⁴¹ donatio. Ex indulgentiis reddi sibi mutuum petit⁴⁴², ut si nihil indulgentiae⁴⁴³ reddant, nihil recuperet. Hic est verus filius, verus servitor, verus amicus vester. Haec est illa, quam quaerit multis in locis Tullius, amicitia: *Amor*, inquit ille, *ex quo amicitia nominata est, Princeps est ad benevolentiam conjungendam*. In amicitia autem nihil est fictum, nihil⁴⁴⁴ simulatum. Sed **quidquid**⁴⁴⁵ id est verum et voluntarium, quemadmodum in hac ducis cernimus⁴⁴⁶ benevolentia, quem si quis vobis neget amicum⁴⁴⁷, cunctos quippe faciat inimicos. Cujus tanta est affectio, tantaque in hunc coetum caritas, ut vestrarum⁴⁴⁸ nullam petitionum abnuat⁴⁴⁹ pecuniasque magis donet, quam mutuo dedat.

⁴⁴¹ applicanda O; appellitanda Z

⁴⁴² reddi sibi mutuum petit : petit sibi mutuum reddi M

⁴⁴³ petant *add.* V

⁴⁴⁴ nil est O

⁴⁴⁵ est *add.* O, V, Z

⁴⁴⁶ ducis cernimus : cernimus ducis O

⁴⁴⁷ *omit.* O

⁴⁴⁸ oratorum Z

⁴⁴⁹ petitionum abnuat: abnuat petitionum B, R

[27] And please take note of this: did the Duke require an onerous caution or burdensome sureties⁴⁵⁰? By Hercules, had I said that the Prince had not asked for any surety at all, I should not be blamed, for the kind of surety he has asked is not really a surety, but should rather be called a donation! He has asked that the loan be repaid out the revenue from the sale of indulgences⁴⁵¹ so that if there is no revenues he will get nothing back. This is your true son; this is your true servant; this is your true friend. This is the friendship that Cicero mentions in many places and about which he says: *For it is love (amor), from which the word "friendship" (amicitia) is derived, that leads to the establishing of goodwill.*⁴⁵² In friendship nothing is pretence, nothing is simulated. Everything is genuine and everything is voluntary as illustrated by the Duke's benevolence towards you. If anyone denies that the Duke is your friend, then indeed he makes everybody your enemy. The Duke's affection and devotion to this assembly are so strong that he will agree to all your requests and rather grant money than loans.

⁴⁵⁰ I.e. caution for the loan to the Council

⁴⁵¹ Pius II: *Orationes*, p. 36, n. 9. Cf. letter of 25 October, 1436 to Siena: *Dux enim Mediolani concilium petens omnem pecuniarum summam oportunam concessurum se pollicetur neque aliam cautionem petit nisi ut semidecimarum indulgentiarumque collectores sibi respondeant*

⁴⁵² Cicero: *Laelius de amicitia*, 8, 26. Quoted after the Loeb edition of 1964

[28] Jamque propter pecunias nihil est quod Papiae objiciatis. Nec illos audio, qui se aureos affirmantes omnibus se Christicolis jactitant ditiores, magnumque auri et argenti pondus habere se⁴⁵³ gloriantur. Quorsum enim illa dicuntur? Forsitan quia vendi concilium putant, ut plus offerenti veneat⁴⁵⁴? Quod probri loco vitandum detestandumque est, ne venditum vulgo concilium dicant. Unum tamen persuasum volo, quod⁴⁵⁵ ducem **scilicet**⁴⁵⁶ ipsum, ubicumque sit opus, quascumque petieritis, daturum esse pecunias neque necessitatibus vestris umquam defuturum. Namque ut volet, sic etiam poterit invenire pecunias. Habet enim, ut scitis, urbem Mediolanum non **solum populosissimam**⁴⁵⁷, verum etiam pecuniosissimam⁴⁵⁸, ubi totius Galliae togatae cumulati thesauri sint⁴⁵⁹, ex qua nulla non⁴⁶⁰ possit haberi summa pecuniarum.

⁴⁵³ habere se : se habere D, L, M, R; *omit.* V

⁴⁵⁴ veniat V

⁴⁵⁵ *omit.* O

⁴⁵⁶ *omit.* O, V

⁴⁵⁷ solum populosissimam : populissimam solum V, Z

⁴⁵⁸ verum ... pecuniosissimam *omit.* R

⁴⁵⁹ sunt Z

⁴⁶⁰ *omit.* O

[28] So, when it comes to funding, there can be no objection to Pavia. And I will not listen to those who claim that they are “golden” and richer than all other Christians, or those who boast that they have a large amount of gold and silver. Why are they saying so? Do they think that the Council is up for sale and will go to the highest bidder? This shame must be avoided and abhorred so that people will not say that the Council has been sold⁴⁶¹. I just want to convince you of this one thing: the Duke will assist you financially whenever needed and whatever you ask for, and he will never fail you in your need. For he can get all the funds he wants. Not only is his city of Milan very populous as you well know, but it is also very rich. All the treasures of *Gallia togata*⁴⁶² are accumulated there so that one is able to gather any sum needed.

⁴⁶¹ Which would be the sin of simony. Cf. letter to Siena of 6 August, 1436: ... si patres de concilio res hujusmodi venales haberent et plus offerenti concederent (Piccolomini: *Epistolarium*, letter 21)

⁴⁶² Gallia togata: the region between the river Po and the Alps = Cisalpine Gaul = Northern Ital

[29] At si de populo illo Mediolanensi {5r} volumus verum dicere, nullum ego devotiorem **vidi**⁴⁶³, nullum fidiorem, nullum suo principi oboedientiore, nullum denique meliorem, ob cuius, ut arbitror, bonitatem ac sanctimoniam divino munere actum est, ne illam urbem nostris diebus pestifera lues invaserit, cui populo nihil erit gratius quam in sanctissimum usum effudisse pecunias. Nec⁴⁶⁴ credite illum munificentissimum principem ob⁴⁶⁵ defectum pecuniarum rem dimissurum, qui non habendi concilii cupiditate argentum modo⁴⁶⁶ pollicetur, sed ne quod⁴⁶⁷ caritate pecuniae in dedecus prolaberemini. Dat ergo, ut satis est, Papia pecuniarum.

[30] De navigio non magnam vim facio. Vestro enim, ut scitis, sumptu conducendae armandaeque sunt triremes, nec dissimiliter balistarii, neque tam grandis pecuniarum modo⁴⁶⁸ ⁴⁶⁹ quantitas petitur, nisi ut navigio balistariisque sufficiat. Depositis enim decem millibus apud Constantinopolim, Graecisque datis⁴⁷⁰ quindecim millibus, viatico quoque oratoribus concilii praestito, quod superest in naves longas, balistariosque dispensabitur, quos conducere ubique poteritis: habentibusque pecunias neque **balistarii**⁴⁷¹ deerunt neque navigia. Jamque illum Sabaudiensem⁴⁷² spectata virtute militem vobis navigia offerentem vidistis, suosque labores promittentem⁴⁷³, cuius nobilitas, animique perspicua generositas non est huic⁴⁷⁴ inepta negotio. **Quare**⁴⁷⁵ sive istas, sive alias multis in locis conducere naves poteritis.

⁴⁶³ umquam *add.* O, V, Z

⁴⁶⁴ Ne M

⁴⁶⁵ ad C

⁴⁶⁶ *omit.* O

⁴⁶⁷ *omit.* B, R

⁴⁶⁸ *omit.* L, M

⁴⁶⁹ pecuniarum modo :modo pecuniarum O

⁴⁷⁰ *omit.* N

⁴⁷¹ vobis *add.* V, Z

⁴⁷² Subaudiensem C

⁴⁷³ promittere V

⁴⁷⁴ *omit.* O

⁴⁷⁵ quamquam V, Z

[29] As for the people of Milan⁴⁷⁶, truly, I have never seen a people more devoted and more faithful and more obedient to their Prince: when all is said and done, never have I seen a better one. I believe that it is because of their goodness and faith that, by the grace of God, their city has not been infested with the plague in our days. Nothing would be more welcome to that people than to spend money in your holy cause. Do not believe that this munificent Prince will give up the matter later due to lack of money: he does not promise money because he wants himself to have the Council, but because he wants to spare us the embarrassment of lacking money. In conclusion: the solution of Pavia will provide enough funding.

1.3. The ships are available

[30] I shall not go deeply into the matter of the sea voyage. As you know, the triremes and the archers are to be hired at your cost, and it is not a large amount that is required – only as much as is sufficient for the ship and the archers. You have already deposited 10,000 ducats in Constantinople⁴⁷⁷; 15,000 ducats have been given to the Greeks; and their travel money has been given to the orators of the Council. What is left will be spent on the long ships and the archers, and these you can hire everywhere. As you have money, you will lack neither archers nor ships. You have already seen that respectable knight from Savoy who offered ships to you and who promised to work for you. His nobleness and generosity of spirit are just what we need in this matter. So, therefore you can either hire his ships, or you can hire other ships in many places.

⁴⁷⁶ Milan (Milano): the capital of Lombardy and a major power in Renaissance Italy

⁴⁷⁷ Constantinople: Capital of the Greek-Roman Empire, founded by the Emperor Constantine in 330, present-day Istanbul. Fell to the Turks in 1453

[31] Placet tamen duci, ne qua in parte deficiat, triremes etiam reperire, quas unde habeat aut quomodo habeat indignum est quod vestigemus. Ratum est enim quodcumque promittit. Hoc tamen non tacebo, navium scilicet illi concessionem non esse difficilem. Siquidem magna⁴⁷⁸, ut⁴⁷⁹ scitis⁴⁸⁰, cum⁴⁸¹ serenissimo ac magnanimo rege Aragonum amicitia est, qui suum, quemadmodum facundissime dixit orator, promptus est tam concilii quam ducis gratia praestare⁴⁸² navigium. Et cui, obsecro, melius haec committi res potest⁴⁸³ quam regi Aragonum? Quis eo diligentius rem fidei pertractet, qui diu⁴⁸⁴ adversus infideles bella gessit. An ignoratis regem illum *catholicum et fidei zelatorem magna saepe manu magnaue classe adversus Afros*, Christiani nominis inimicissimos, decertasse? Illa profecto laus illaque huic regi⁴⁸⁵ gloria tribuatur Mediterraneum mare sua diligentia ab infidelibus piratis⁴⁸⁶ esse custoditum. Et quod magno Pompejo decori fuit, huic⁴⁸⁷ etiam⁴⁸⁸ concedamus honori⁴⁸⁹, cujus nisi frequenter⁴⁹⁰ in pelago classica insonaret tuba, ad ipsum usque litus Etruscum⁴⁹¹, Libycae naves hostilesque classes infidelium crassarentur⁴⁹². Sed timent⁴⁹³ praestantissimum⁴⁹⁴ regem Jonii, Tyrrhenique⁴⁹⁵ maris custodem, qui Sardiniam, Corsicam, Siciliam, Baleares⁴⁹⁶ ac Vulcanias⁴⁹⁷ insulas ab omni Sarracenorum⁴⁹⁸ impetu liberavit: cui {5v} magis erit molestum in tanta re fidei non requiri, quam si totam ejus classem dira tempestas absorpserit. Aut igitur regiae naves compraestabuntur, aut marina aliunde vasa comperientur. Ac de primo principalique membro satis sit dictum.

⁴⁷⁸ sibi add. O

⁴⁷⁹ omit. M

⁴⁸⁰ omit. L, M

⁴⁸¹ omit. L

⁴⁸² praeterire V

⁴⁸³ committi res potest : committeres M

⁴⁸⁴ dum L, M

⁴⁸⁵ omit. L, M

⁴⁸⁶ piratis A, B, C, N, O, R, V, Z; pyrratis D; pyratiss L

⁴⁸⁷ omit. L

⁴⁸⁸ huic etiam : ejus M

⁴⁸⁹ honorem Z

⁴⁹⁰ nisi frequenter : frequenter nisi L, M

⁴⁹¹ litus etruscum: litus etruschum A, V; littus etruscum B, M; littus ethruscum C, D, L

⁴⁹² grassarentur M, O

⁴⁹³ tamen L, M

⁴⁹⁴ paratissimum V

⁴⁹⁵ Tyrrenique A, B, R; tirrenique C, N, O, V; tirenique Z

⁴⁹⁶ Balchaes V

⁴⁹⁷ Vulcaneas N; Vulcanas O

⁴⁹⁸ Seracinorum V

[31] However, so as not to fail you in any way whatsoever, the Duke has decided to provide triremes, too. It would be unworthy of us to inquire where and how he will obtain them, for whatever he promises holds true. Still, I shall tell you why it is easy for him to provide ships. As you know, the Duke is bound in close friendship⁴⁹⁹ with His most serene and magnanimous Highness, the King of Aragon⁵⁰⁰, who would like nothing better – as his orator has stated so eloquently – than to make his ships available for the sake of the Council and of the Duke. To whom could this matter be better entrusted than to the King of Aragon? Who would more diligently deal with this matter of the Faith than he who has fought so long against the infidels? Or do you not know that this Catholic King, zealous in matters of the faith, often fought - with a large force and a large fleet - against the Africans, who are inveterate enemies of Christianity? Indeed, it is his honour and glory to have made the Mediterranean Sea safe from the infidel pirates by his own efforts. Pompey the Great⁵⁰¹ was equally meritorious, and for the same reason we honour the King who frequently made his trumpets sound when the Libyan ships and the hostile fleets of the infidels roamed that very sea and even as far as to the Tuscan shore. They fear this excellent King of the Ionian Sea and Guardian of the Tyrrhenian Sea, who has freed Sardinia, Corsica, Sicily and the Balearic and the Volcanic Islands⁵⁰² from all the attacks of the Saracens. For him it would be worse not to be asked for assistance in this great cause of the Faith than to have his entire fleet devoured by a terrible storm. In conclusion, either the King's ships will be made available or else ships will be provided in another manner.

I have now said enough about the first and most important part of my subject.

⁴⁹⁹ The King fell into the hands of the Duke when he was defeated by the Genovese fleet in the sea battle of Ponza in 1435. The King was treated honourably by the Duke, and then the two Princes concluded an alliance which completely upset the political and military balance of Italy

⁵⁰⁰ Alfonso V the Magnanimous (b. 1396, k. 1416, d. 1458: King of Aragon and Sicily. As King of Sicily (the island part of the Kingdom of Naples) he had been adopted as heir to the Queen of Naples (i.e. the mainland part of the Kingdom of Sicily) in 1421 and henceforth campaigned systematically to get effective control of mainland Sicily, which he acquired in 1443

⁵⁰¹ Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (b. 106-48 BC): Roman general and statesman

⁵⁰² Islands in the Mediterranean Sea East of Italy

[32] Transeo⁵⁰³ ad secundum, ubi dicebam talem esse locum oportere, ad quem commode papa⁵⁰⁴ cum concilio conveniret, nec irrationabiliter. Nam cum Graecos ad unionem sitis vocaturi, dignum est vos prius⁵⁰⁵ esse unitos, ne quod schisma, ne quam divisionem, ne quam inter vos controversiam Graeci reperiant. Verisimile etenim est facilius reduci Graecos, si vos unanimes quam si⁵⁰⁶ disjunctos agnoscant⁵⁰⁷. Neque ob hanc solum⁵⁰⁸ causam, sed ut multa scandala infinitaque mala cessent, quae nostra divisio suscitavit, quam schisma non injuria⁵⁰⁹ vocitabimus. Hoc est quod regius orator Simon **Caroli**⁵¹⁰, vir non sapientia solum, sed eloquentia singularis, hoc in loco flagitabat enixe, cujus verba, patres amplissimi, cum locum eligeretis, vestris debebunt insedere pectoribus, ut summe curetis posse⁵¹¹ papam interesse.

⁵⁰³ *margin note:* Secunda pars orationis A

⁵⁰⁴ commode papa : papa commode L, M

⁵⁰⁵ primum N

⁵⁰⁶ vos *add.* L, M, O

⁵⁰⁷ cognoscant N

⁵⁰⁸ solam O

⁵⁰⁹ *omit.* V

⁵¹⁰ Karoli A, B, C, D, N, O, R; *omit.* V, Z

⁵¹¹ *omit.* O; possem V

2. Pavia is convenient for the Pope

[32] I now move on to the second part.

As I said in the beginning, we need a location that is convenient for the Pope to meet with the Council. This is quite reasonable. For if you want to invite the Greeks to unite with you, you ought first to be united yourselves so that the Greeks will find no schism, no disunity and no dispute between you. Obviously, the Greeks will be brought back⁵¹² more easily if they find that you are of one mind than if they find that you are divided. And we should ourselves unite first not just because of the union with Greeks, but also in order to put an end to all the scandals and the countless evils which have been caused by our disunity - or to put it more properly: our schism. This is what the King's ambassador, Simon Charles⁵¹³, a man of singular wisdom and eloquence, urged so brilliantly in this very room. Honourable Fathers, when you choose the location, you should heed his words and take great care to make it possible for the Pope to participate.

⁵¹² I.e. to the union with the Roman Church

⁵¹³ Simon Charles: counselor of King Charles of France, ambassador to the Council of Basel

[33] Nec etiam⁵¹⁴ sanctissimam illam⁵¹⁵ sedem Petrique verissimum successorem ac Christi vicarium debetis contemnere. Hoc est quidem caput nostrum, quod separatum esse nequaquam convenit, quod nullum sine capite corpus potest esse perfectum. Hic est sponsus ecclesiae, hic magister navis; hic, ut vulgo dicunt, in terris Deus, cui claves regni caelorum per Petrum aliosque Petri successores Christus, redemptor noster, contulit, quamquam ecclesiae quoque non inficior datas. Hujus tanta est auctoritas, tanta potestas, tanta divinorum concessa mysteriorum cognitio, ut omni honore omnique veneratione sit dignus⁵¹⁶. Tantaque reverentiae papalis est dignitas, ut papam, vel malum, honorare venerarique teneamur. Neque⁵¹⁷ **temnere**⁵¹⁸ papam quisquam⁵¹⁹ debet, quamcumque libidinem, quodcumque nefas maturaverit, nisi prius ecclesia judicarit.

[34] Quid de praesenti summo dicemus pontifice? Esset mihi de sua nunc sanctimonia sermo, nisi magnifice oratores regi⁵²⁰ de ipsius **pietate**⁵²¹, mansuetudine, aequitate, justitia **et bonitate**⁵²² dixissent. Nos illud nequaquam inficiamur, sanctissimum dominum nostrum in futuro concilio fore necessarium, ut non auctoritate solum, sed **etiam**⁵²³ morum honestate proficiat⁵²⁴.

⁵¹⁴ enim D, L, O

⁵¹⁵ sanctissimam illam: illam sanctissimam O

⁵¹⁶ sit dignus : dignus sit O

⁵¹⁷ nec D, L, M

⁵¹⁸ spernere V, Z

⁵¹⁹ quisquam papam : papam quisquam O

⁵²⁰ regis M

⁵²¹ omit. V, Z

⁵²² et bonitate : pietate V, Z

⁵²³ vitae et O, V, Z

⁵²⁴ perficiat O

2.1. The Pope is the head of the Church

[33] For you should not despise the Holy See and the true successor of Peter and the Vicar of Christ⁵²⁵. He is our head which should never be separated from us, for a body cannot be complete without its head. He is the bridegroom of the Church; he is the captain of the ship; he is (as people say) God on earth. Through Peter and Peter's successors Christ, our Saviour, has given him the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven⁵²⁶, though I do not deny that they have also been given to the Church as a whole. To him has been given so great an authority, so great a power, so great a knowledge of the divine mysteries that he is to be revered above all. Indeed, the papal dignity is so venerable that we must honour and revere the Pope – even an evil one. So, whatever lust he may have indulged in, or whatever crime he may have committed, he must not be held in contempt before the Church has passed judgment⁵²⁷.

2.2. Pope Eugene IV

[34] What shall I say about the present Supreme Pontiff⁵²⁸? I would now have to speak about his holy life if the King's ambassadors⁵²⁹ had not already spoken splendidly about his piety, his clemency, his fairness, his sense of justice, and his goodness. We shall in no way deny that our Holy Lord⁵³⁰ will be necessary to the future Council⁵³¹ so that it may benefit not only from the authority of his office, but also from his personal moral qualities⁵³².

⁵²⁵ Here Piccolomini expresses the traditional conception of the Pope as the head of the Church ...

⁵²⁶ Matthew 16: 13-20

⁵²⁷ ... but in the end he states the conciliarist position that the Council is ultimately above the Pope and can pass judgement on him, as the Council of Constance had done 20 years before and the Council of Basel itself were to do some years later. The passage "he [the Pope] must not be held in contempt before the Church [i.e. the Council] has passed judgement" is in direct contradiction of the medieval, papalist view that "the Pope can be judged by nobody" (pape a nemine iudicetur)

⁵²⁸ Eugenius IV (b 1383, p. 1431, d. 1447): Pope

⁵²⁹ "oratores"

⁵³⁰ i.e. the Pope

⁵³¹ i.e. The Union Council

⁵³² Eugenius IV was generally considered a stubborn and undiplomatic person, Pope and statesman, but at the same time a man of great piety and great moral qualities

[35] Nunc videndum commodam ne sibi Papiam censeamus. Et quemadmodum mea fert opinio, nihil est quod hic locus papae displiceat, sive **commoditatem viarum**⁵³³, sive securitatem percipiat⁵³⁴. Ex Bononia usque Papiam parum itineris interjacet, via tuta et plana sive terra sive aqua aptissimum iter. Neque locus est aliquis eligibilis, ad quem papae facilius sit accessus.

[36] Tutus praeterea sibi locus est, {6r} quod neque cum civibus, neque cum principe aliqua sibi lis est. Multumque demiror⁵³⁵ nonnullorum temeritatem inter papam ducemque **esse**⁵³⁶ contententium inimicitias. Unde enim hoc **dicant**⁵³⁷, nescio: forsitan utriusque introspiciunt animos, de aliena mente vaticinantes. Ego scio ducem Mediolani numquam inimicum appellasse papam, numquam adversarium, numquam contrarium, numquam minus sobrium de summo pontifice verbum effudisse. Ceterum magna reverentia summaque veneratione semper patrem sanctissimum⁵³⁸, semper⁵³⁹ dominum clementissimum⁵⁴⁰ vocitasse.

⁵³³ commoditatem viarum: viarum commoditatem V, Z

⁵³⁴ percipiat C

⁵³⁵ omit. O

⁵³⁶ fore O, V, Z

⁵³⁷ dubitent O; dictitent V, Z

⁵³⁸ patrem sanctissimum : patres sanctissimi V

⁵³⁹ semperque L, M

⁵⁴⁰ patrem ... clementissimum : dominum clementissimum, semper patrem sanctissimum C

2.3. Distance of Pavia from the Pope

[35] Let us now look at how Pavia is convenient for him. In my opinion, nothing about Pavia should displease him whether he desires the commodity of the roads or safety. There is only a short distance from Bologna⁵⁴¹ to Pavia, the route is safe and even, and both by road and by river the journey is highly comfortable. No other place is easier for the Pope to get to.

2.4. Relations between the Pope and the Duke of Milan

[36] Moreover, the place is safe for him because he has no quarrel with the citizens nor with its Prince. I am greatly surprised by the temerity of some people who claim that there is enmity between the Pope and the Duke⁵⁴². How they can say that, I simply do not know. Maybe they are looking inside both of their heads, trying to guess the minds of others. For my own part, I know for sure that the Duke of Milan has never called the Pope an enemy, or an adversary or an opponent, and he has never spoken less than respectfully about the Supreme Pontiff. On the contrary, he has always spoken with great reverence and deference to the Pope and called him Most Holy Father and Most Gracious Lord.

⁵⁴¹ Where the Pope was in residence at the time

⁵⁴² In a letter to Siena of 6 August 1436 (Piccolomini: *Epistolarium*, letter 21), Piccolomini wrote: *As regards the Duke, his enmity with the pope is an obstacle (duci obstat inimicitia papae)*. There had certainly been a serious conflict between the Pope and the Duke, as part of the power game in Italy at the time. The Pope was perceived as an opponent of Milan for at least two reasons: firstly, he was Venetian and favouring Venice, the mortal enemy of Milan; secondly, he naturally opposed the expansionist designs of Milan in the Papal State. The Duke's support of the Council – against the Pope – was related to this conflict. Interestingly, Piccolomini himself had probably in the course of this conflict, some years before, been involved in a Milanese plot to seize the Pope's person. The man in charge of this conspiracy was Bartolomeo Visconti, Bishop of Novara on Milanese territory, who was closely connected with the Duke of Milan and who was Piccolomini's employer at the time. Piccolomini obviously downplays what was a very dangerous conflict for the Pope, but it is probably true to say that the conflict was a political one, and not the result of personal enmity. It could therefore have been ended by the peace treaty between Milan and the Pope in 1435, but later events showed that it had not

[37] ut si qua umquam indignatio fuerit, victus⁵⁴³ ducali patientia summus pontifex nil aliud duci posset dicere, nisi quod solus adversus iram vera arma verasque vires, quibus se tutaretur⁵⁴⁴, invenisset, sicut⁵⁴⁵ in Tusculano senatu dixisse Camillum Livius refert. Numquid praeterea⁵⁴⁶ novimus inimicitias, si quae **fuerant**⁵⁴⁷, exacto jam anno per pacem sopitas? Cujus mediatores fuerunt⁵⁴⁸ viri optimi atque rarissimi⁵⁴⁹, cardinales sanctae crucis et sancti Petri, a vestro sacerrimo coetu ob eam rem Florentiam destinati. Conditiones⁵⁵⁰ pacis secundum papam dictae. Post **eam**⁵⁵¹ nihil⁵⁵² umquam odiosum inter eos contigit.

[38] Sed ut videatis manifestissima benevolentiae indicia, hic animum paulisper intendite. Defecerunt ab⁵⁵³ duce **Genuenses**⁵⁵⁴, qui cum bello undique premerentur, libertatis servandae gratia cum Venetis ac⁵⁵⁵ Florentinis foedera percusserunt. Tum papa ingens duci bellum imminere cognoscens, imparemque⁵⁵⁶ tantis⁵⁵⁷ viribus **eum**⁵⁵⁸ existimans, ne periculoso⁵⁵⁹ nimis proelio urgeretur, auctorem se pacis obtulit, virumque omnium opinione probatissimum cardinalem sanctae crucis misit, qui ducem de pace requireret, ipse alios flexurus⁵⁶⁰. Quo inspecto animo omnem dux ipse litem omnemque controversiam sanctissimo domino nostro commisit, arbitrumque et amicabilem compositorem inter se atque hostes papam elegit.

⁵⁴³ victrix Z
⁵⁴⁴ tutaret Z; se tutarentur : setteret V
⁵⁴⁵ sic Z
⁵⁴⁶ non *add.* M
⁵⁴⁷ fuerat O; fuerunt V, Z
⁵⁴⁸ exacto ... fuerunt : *omit.* V
⁵⁴⁹ clarissimi V
⁵⁵⁰ conditiones A, O
⁵⁵¹ pacem *add.* O, V, Z
⁵⁵² nil O
⁵⁵³ a M
⁵⁵⁴ Januenses V, Z
⁵⁵⁵ et N
⁵⁵⁶ in paceque V
⁵⁵⁷ tanti B, R
⁵⁵⁸ ducem O, V, Z
⁵⁵⁹ periculo B
⁵⁶⁰ flexuros V

[37] And when there was a conflict between them, the Supreme Pontiff was overcome by the Duke's forbearance : he had to admit that the Duke had used legitimate weapons and legitimate force against him and only in self-defense, just – as, according to Livy⁵⁶¹, Camillus⁵⁶² spoke in the Tusculan Senate⁵⁶³. Moreover, we know⁵⁶⁴ that this enmity (if you can really call it that) was ended through the conclusion of a peace already more than a year ago⁵⁶⁵. The mediators of this peace were those two great and distinguished members of your own sacred assembly, the Cardinals of Santa Croce⁵⁶⁶ and of San Pietro⁵⁶⁷ whom you sent to Florence for this very purpose. The peace conditions were dictated by the Pope himself, and afterwards there has been no enmity between them whatsoever.

[38] But if you want irrefutable proofs of their friendship, then just hear this: the Genoese were pressed by war on all sides⁵⁶⁸, and in order to keep their liberty they defected from the Duke and instead concluded a treaty with Venice and Florence.⁵⁶⁹ The Pope learned that the Duke was threatened by a major war and estimated that the Duke's forces were no match for the great forces of his enemies. To prevent that the Duke be pressed into a war too risky for him⁵⁷⁰, the Pope then offered himself as a peacemaker, sent the widely respected Cardinal of Santa Croce⁵⁷¹ on a peace mission to the Duke, and he himself undertook to persuade the other parties. When the Duke had considered this, he entrusted the whole conflict and the whole controversy to our Holy Lord⁵⁷² and choose the Pope as mediator and friendly peacemaker between himself and his enemies⁵⁷³.

⁵⁶¹ Titus Livius (59 BC-17 AD): Roman historian

⁵⁶² Marcus Furius Camillus (ca. 446 – 365 BC): Roman general

⁵⁶³ Livy: *Ab urbe condita*, 6, 26, 1-2. Cf. Loeb ed. 1924, p. 286. The event took place in 382 BC

⁵⁶⁴ Cf. Pius II: *Orationes*, p. 36, n. 11

⁵⁶⁵ 10.8.1435, Pesce, p. 18

⁵⁶⁶ Niccolò Albergati (b. 1373, c. 1426, d. 1443): cardinal

⁵⁶⁷ Juan Cervantes (b. ?, c. 1426, d. 1453): cardinal

⁵⁶⁸ The Genoese defected from the Duke of Milan on December 27, 1435. The so-called Ligurian war between the Duke and Genova ensued, cf. Pesce

⁵⁶⁹ 29.5.1436, cf. Pesce

⁵⁷⁰ Cf. Pius II: *Orationes*, p. 36, n. 12

⁵⁷¹ Niccolò Albergati

⁵⁷² i.e. the Pope, cf. Pesce p. 78

⁵⁷³ These shifts in alliances are typical of the Italian power politics of the time: every state systematically worked against any other state or coalition of states becoming too strong. The Pope invited Milan and the league of Venice, Florence, Genova to peace negotiations in Bologna. They began on August 6, but did not at this time lead to peace, cf. Pesce, p. 78-79. The war continued and peace, eventually made, and the Duke of Milan was reconciled with the Pope some years later

[39] Cujus **rei veritatem**^{574 575}, nisi agnitam omnibus scirem, Roberti Florentini, novitatum diligentissimi exactoris, testimonium implorarem⁵⁷⁶, apud quem non unae litterae reperirentur. Vidi ego hisce oculis apostolicas litteras paternae caritatis et exuberantis plenas dilectionis, quae duci directae fuerant, ut nihil filiis parentes soleant⁵⁷⁷ scribere dulcius.

[40] Sed ponamus fore inimicitias. Numquid terram inimici Papiam dicet, quae, cum in vestra futura sit manu, inimici reputari non potest, nisi concilium **existimet**⁵⁷⁸ inimicum. Libere namque in manibus vestris⁵⁷⁹ daturum se urbem dux pollicetur. Quo facto nihil erit, quod papae timendum sit. Ac si quid securius papa exigat, nihil est quod illum principem **{6v}** negaturum rear⁵⁸⁰. Adest orator suus, vir clarus atque facundus, Christoforus de **Velate**⁵⁸¹: expetite⁵⁸² securitates. An adeo difficilis res ista censetur⁵⁸³, ut inveniri modus nequeat? Certe non video, cur **magis alii quam dux dare papae securitatem valeant**⁵⁸⁴.

[41] Sunt in hoc concilio cardinales aliique praelati quamplures, sunt etiam in Romana curia, quorum neque vobis, neque papae suspecta est fides. Committite his gubernaculum civitatis; jurent in manibus horum officiales civesque, si⁵⁸⁵ oportet⁵⁸⁶, fidelitatis exhibeant juramentum. Quo⁵⁸⁷ tunc jure **aut**⁵⁸⁸ urbem papa contemnat in manibus suorum positam amicorum, aut quo ibit, si huc non veniat?

⁵⁷⁴ *omit.* B, C, N, O, R

⁵⁷⁵ rei veritatem : rem V, Z

⁵⁷⁶ imploratorem C

⁵⁷⁷ solent L, M

⁵⁷⁸ existimetur O, V, Z

⁵⁷⁹ manibus vestris : vestris manibus O

⁵⁸⁰ reat B; erat R; reor Z

⁵⁸¹ Valet R; Vellate O, V, Z

⁵⁸² expedite R

⁵⁸³ censeatur V

⁵⁸⁴ magis ... valeant : aliorum magis quam ducis oblate securitates accipiende sint V, Z

⁵⁸⁵ sibi Z

⁵⁸⁶ oporteat L, M

⁵⁸⁷ quod C

⁵⁸⁸ hanc O, V, Z

[39] If I did not know that you are all aware of this fact, I would ask for confirmation from Roberto of Florence⁵⁸⁹, that diligent gatherer of news, who is in possession of many letters⁵⁹⁰. With my own eyes I have seen apostolic⁵⁹¹ letters sent to the Duke, full of paternal charity and great love. Parents could not write more lovingly to their children.

2.5. The Council will have control over Pavia

[40] But let us set this issue of enmity between the Pope and the Duke aside. For, after all, how can anybody claim that Pavia to be hostile territory when it would be placed in your own hands? Surely, it can only be considered hostile if the Council declares it to be so. The Duke promises to give the city freely into your hands, and, when that happens, the Pope will have nothing to fear⁵⁹². And if they Pope demands greater safety, I believe that this Prince will deny him nothing. But the Duke's ambassador, Cristorofo da Velate⁵⁹³, that esteemed and eloquent man, is present: demand guarantees from him! Or do you consider this problem to be so difficult that no solution may be found? For my own part, I certainly do not see how other people would be able to provide greater security to the Pope than the Duke.

[41] In this Council as well as in the Roman Curia there are cardinals and many other prelates whose loyalty is well-known both to you and to the Pope. Entrust the government of the city to such people; let the city officials and citizens swear an oath between their hands, and, if necessary, let them provide a sworn statement of allegiance. With what right could the Pope then reject a city which had been put into the hands of his own friends, and where else could he go if he did not want to come there?

⁵⁸⁹ Possibly Roberto Martelli, manager of the Medici office in Basel from 1433-1438

⁵⁹⁰ This passage throws an interesting light on dissemination of news and on information gathering at the time, with bankers having the function as veritable nodes of information

⁵⁹¹ Apostolic: i.e. papal. Piccolomini very rarely uses the word "papal"; he prefers the traditional term "apostolic"

⁵⁹² In view of the fact that the preceding Council, i.e. the Council of Constance 1414-1418, deposed three Popes, it is not quite clear why the Pope should feel safe in a city controlled by the Council particularly in view of his conflicts with the Council that actually later deposed him

⁵⁹³ Cristoforo da Velate: Milanese diplomat

[42] Quod si modus iste⁵⁹⁴ non placet, excogitate alios. Nihil⁵⁹⁵ negare ducem invenietis, quod⁵⁹⁶ rationi consentaneum⁵⁹⁷ judicabitis. Ceterum si nihil horum recipitis, ostendam vobis denique, cum requiretis, etiam in civitate Papiensi summi pontificis non abesse consensum. Nunc istud praetereamus. Satis namque mihi **fuerit ei locum recusandi abstulisse**⁵⁹⁸, quem venire nolentem cogere non possemus. Sat fuit⁵⁹⁹, si venire eum commode posse ostensum est.

[43] Restat concilium quoque cum papa illic commode⁶⁰⁰ monstrare⁶⁰¹ futurum, quoniam licet cuncti ad reductionem Graecorum papam clamitent necessarium, ego non minus puto concilium opportunum. Concilium namque rem inchoavit; concilium⁶⁰², si omittatur⁶⁰³, dedecus, si **perficiatur**⁶⁰⁴, laus sit secutura. Concilium eligere locum debet; concilium pecunias invenire ac triremes oportet mittere; concilium denique totius rei consummationi supereminet. Exigit⁶⁰⁵ ergo res ista non minus concilii quam papae praesentiam. Idcirco locum **utrisque**⁶⁰⁶ aptum debetis eligere.

⁵⁹⁴ modus iste: iste modus L, M

⁵⁹⁵ Nil O

⁵⁹⁶ quem V

⁵⁹⁷ rationi consentaneum : consentaneum rationi N

⁵⁹⁸ fuerit ... abstulisse : videtur si justam repudiandi causam papae auferamus, neque sibi apud Deum mundumve relinquamus excusandi locum O, V, Z [V has mundum instead of mundumve]

⁵⁹⁹ fuerit L, M

⁶⁰⁰ omit. V

⁶⁰¹ monstrante V

⁶⁰² omit. N

⁶⁰³ ommittant B, R

⁶⁰⁴ proficiatur V, Z

⁶⁰⁵ exigit V

⁶⁰⁶ utrique O, V

[42] But if this solution is not acceptable, then think of others. You will find that the Duke will refuse nothing that you consider to be reasonable. And if you do not accept any of this, I shall, if you so require, show that within the city of Pavia itself there is general support for the Pope. But let us now leave this issue. Evidently, we cannot force the Pope to come to a place where he does not want to go, but it is sufficient for me to have removed the ground for him to reject Pavia and to have shown that he is able to travel there with ease.

2.6. Pavia is also convenient for the Council

[43] It remains to show that also the Council can move to Pavia with ease. For even if everybody declares that the Pope is essential for bringing back the Greeks, I consider that the Council is just as important. The Council started this whole matter. So, it would be shameful to discontinue the Council and meritorious to continue it. It is the responsibility of the Council to select the location, to find the money, to send the triremes, and generally to have the final say concerning the completion of the whole the matter. So, the presence of both the Council and the Pope is required, and you must, therefore, choose a location which is convenient for both.

[44] Hanc esse Christianissimi regis Francorum ejusque oratorum arbitror intentionem. Quis enim non sanctissimum illius gloriosissimi regis propositum interpretetur? Quis de tali tantoque rege non caste atque optime suspicetur? Etenim sive⁶⁰⁷ antecessorum ejus gesta **consideramus**⁶⁰⁸, sive vitam ipsius ante oculos **praeponamus**⁶⁰⁹, regnum illud amplissimum, longe lateque patens, semper fuisse tutamen et ornamentum fidei cognoscemus⁶¹⁰. De qua re, si dicere velim, prius dies quam verba deficiant⁶¹¹, pleni namque sunt codices historiarumque libri, majorumque regum clarissima gesta divinis quasi laudibus ubique gentium celebrantur. Totque fuerunt illius regni egregia pro fide facinora, ut non solum inter regna principatum obtinuerit, sed christianissimum quadam ultra cetera excellentia meruerit⁶¹² appellari.

[45] Sed quid⁶¹³ ego **ista**⁶¹⁴ commemoro, quae meis dictis facio viliora? Taceo de illo gymnasio⁶¹⁵ memorabili et famosa schola Parisiensi, cujus doctrina incredibile dictu⁶¹⁶ est, quantum {7r} fidei praestiterit incrementum, quam veteres reges singulari semper⁶¹⁷ reverentia prosecuti dicuntur. Neque ab⁶¹⁸ praedecessoribus suis modernum regem degenerantem cernimus, sed regibus quibusque superioribus belli pacisque artibus et gloria parem.

⁶⁰⁷ sine V

⁶⁰⁸ consideremus O, V, Z

⁶⁰⁹ proponamus M; ponamus V, Z

⁶¹⁰ cognoscimus Z

⁶¹¹ deficient C; deficerent N; difficient V; deficiat Z

⁶¹² meruerunt V

⁶¹³ omit. N

⁶¹⁴ omit. V, Z

⁶¹⁵ cignasio V

⁶¹⁶ dictum Z

⁶¹⁷ omit. N

⁶¹⁸ a B, D, L, M, R, Z

2.7. The attitude of the King of France

[44] I perceive that this is also the intent of the Most Christian King of France⁶¹⁹ and his ambassadors⁶²⁰. Who does not understand the intentions of his glorious Majesty in this way? And who does not think well and respectfully about this great King? Whether we consider the accomplishments of his predecessors or look at his own life, we must acknowledge that this great and vast Kingdom has always been a bastion and an ornament of the Faith. If I were to talk about this subject, the day would run out before the words, for the volumes and history books are full of them. The magnificent accomplishments of the former Kings are celebrated everywhere with almost divine praises⁶²¹. So many were the illustrious deeds of this Kingdom for the Faith that it gained the first place among the kingdoms and even merited to be called Most Christian – among other excellent kingdoms.

[45] But why do I dwell on these things when my words cannot do them justice. I pass over that famous gymnasium and wonderful school of Paris⁶²²: it is impossible to speak adequately about its scholarship and how greatly it has contributed to the growth of the Faith. The old Kings are said to have always shown it particular respect, and we see that the present King lives up to his predecessors and equals the former kings in the arts of war and peace as well as in glory.

⁶¹⁹ Charles VII: King of France (b. 1403, k. 1429, d. 1461)

⁶²⁰ Simon Charles

⁶²¹ A number of Frankish emperors, starting with Charlemagne himself, and French Kings had over the centuries supported the Popes militarily and intervened on their behalf

⁶²² i.e. the University of Sorbonne. In this period the term “university” had not yet gained general currency. This university was a strong and highly respected proponent of conciliarism (Stieber, p. 62). The remark of Piccolomini is therefore both a compliment and a statement

[46] De cuius inclita iustitia ac religione, quamvis multa possimus⁶²³ ordiri, illud prae ceteris adnotemus, quod erga universalem ecclesiam sacrosanctumque concilium factitavit. Inter papam et vos⁶²⁴ olim illa prior **dissensio**⁶²⁵ fuit, quod hic vos⁶²⁶ concilium dicere, ille negare. Ecclesiam Gallicanam⁶²⁷ rex consuluit, qua concilium hic esse declarante omni vos favore juvandos statuit. Missi e vestigio oratores viri ex archiepiscopali episcopalique dignitate, tum doctrina, tum etiam bonitate praestantes, qui jam quintum vobiscum⁶²⁸ annum in agro dominico laborantes ducunt. Pecuniae ex regno ad utilitatem concilii detrahi permissae. Mandatum ut praelati **proficiscantur ad concilium**⁶²⁹; auxilium datum, quodcumque petitem a⁶³⁰ vobis est.

[47] Et quid aliud de ipso dixerim rege, nisi quod inter alios sibi praecipue teneamur, cujus auxilio defensi **servatique**⁶³¹ sumus. *Et quae melior est, inquit Cicero, in hominum genere natura quam eorum, qui se natos ad homines juvandos, tutandos, conservandos arbitrantur?* O regem ergo gloriosissimum, o principem excellentissimum, o vere Christianissimum fidei defensorem: tu ecclesiam defendis; tu fidei consulis⁶³²; tu concilium veneraris; tu es quem merito honorare perpetuisque praeconiis debemus extollere.

⁶²³ possumus L, M

⁶²⁴ nos V

⁶²⁵ dissentio A, B, D; discussio V, Z

⁶²⁶ nos V

⁶²⁷ Gallicinam D, L; Gallicam V

⁶²⁸ omit. O

⁶²⁹ proficiscantur ad concilium : ad concilium proficiscantur N, O, V

⁶³⁰ omit. B, R

⁶³¹ omit. V, Z [as this word occurs in O, it points to O not having been copied from Z

⁶³² tu fidei consulis: omit. C

[46] We could say much about his elevated sense of justice and his piety, but above all we take note of his achievements for the universal Church and the Holy Council. At one point there was disagreement between the Pope and you: you maintained that the Council was to be here⁶³³, and the Pope refused.⁶³⁴ The King consulted the Gallican Church, and when it declared that the Council was here, he decided to favour your cause in every way. So, very soon⁶³⁵ he sent you his envoys, eminently learned and virtuous men of archiepiscopal and episcopal rank who have now been toiling together with you in the field of the Lord for more than four years. He allowed money to be sent for the use of the Council; he ordered prelates to go to the Council; whatever aid you asked for, he gave.

[47] What else can I say about this King except that we are particularly obliged to him for his help and support. As Cicero says: *What better type of nature therefore can we find among human beings than the men who regard themselves as born into the world to help, guard and preserve their fellowmen?*⁶³⁶

Oh, glorious King! Oh, excellent Prince! Oh, truly Most Christian Defender of the Faith! You defend the Church; you care about the Faith; you venerate the Council. It is you that we should honor and acclaim with perpetual praise.

⁶³³ i.e. in Basel

⁶³⁴ In 1431 and 1432 the Pope, Eugenius IV, tried to transfer the Council from Basel to a city in Italy, but the Council would have none of it and in the end the Pope gave in. However, the venue of the Council became an issue again some years later in connection with the negotiations of Church union with the Greeks

⁶³⁵ Among them the Archbishop of Lyon, Amédée de Talaru

⁶³⁶ Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 1, 14, 32. Quoted from the Loeb edition of 1927

[48] Hic cum crebras⁶³⁷ inter vos⁶³⁸ ac summum pontificem dissensiones cerneret, saepenumero ad pacem laboravit nunc vobis, nunc summo pontifici supplicans tolli discidium⁶³⁹. Nec **aliud**⁶⁴⁰ Simon collegaeque⁶⁴¹ rogitant, nisi ut concilium cum papa conveniat, omnesque discordiarum fomites amputentur. Quis⁶⁴² hic, obsecro, irascatur? **Non**⁶⁴³ rectae sanctaeque illae sunt voces? Non⁶⁴⁴ **omnes idem**⁶⁴⁵ cupitis? Ego sane, nisi⁶⁴⁶ aliud sentio, non possum militarem⁶⁴⁷ illum virum non laudare. Rem namque optimam et⁶⁴⁸ concessu dignissimam petit. Commonet schismatis evitare causas⁶⁴⁹, communem papae locum **petit**⁶⁵⁰, neque specialius⁶⁵¹ quidquam⁶⁵² dicit⁶⁵³, neque locum aliquem nominatim⁶⁵⁴ repudiat⁶⁵⁵. Cujus, nisi fallor, verba eligendam⁶⁵⁶ nobis Papiam⁶⁵⁷ suadent. Vult enim papam et concilium simul esse, concordiamque **utrimque**⁶⁵⁸ **fieri**⁶⁵⁹, cuius non nisi tres vias esse⁶⁶⁰ considero: ut vel papae omnino mos geratur, vel vobis, aut transactio quaedam litigiorum⁶⁶¹ fiat. **Sperare**⁶⁶² superiora vanum reor. Ad tertiam rem missus est Simon, ut communis utrique locus eligatur. Et quis, obsecro, Papiam communior aut aptior atque⁶⁶³ utrique commodior? Gravior forsitan alius papae⁶⁶⁴ locus esset, qui tamen vobis non esset tutus.

⁶³⁷ *omit.* O

⁶³⁸ nos M

⁶³⁹ dissidium M, V [L correction: discidium for dissidium]

⁶⁴⁰ modo *add.* O, V, Z

⁶⁴¹ collegae B, R

⁶⁴² quid A, B, C, N, R [D corrects quis for quid by erasure and overwriting]

⁶⁴³ num A, B, C, D, L, N, O, R; nam V, Z

⁶⁴⁴ num A, B, C, D, L, N, R

⁶⁴⁵ omnes idem : idem omnes V, Z

⁶⁴⁶ nil V

⁶⁴⁷ *omit.* V

⁶⁴⁸ *omit.* O

⁶⁴⁹ dans V

⁶⁵⁰ obsecrat O, V, Z

⁶⁵¹ specificè Z

⁶⁵² aliud Z

⁶⁵³ neque ... dicit : specificè neque alium diem V

⁶⁵⁴ nomine tum V

⁶⁵⁵ repudiant V

⁶⁵⁶ *omit.* L, M

⁶⁵⁷ nobis Papiam: Papiam nobis L, M

⁶⁵⁸ utriusque V, Z

⁶⁵⁹ fidei V, Z

⁶⁶⁰ vias esse: esse vias D, L, M

⁶⁶¹ legitimorum V

⁶⁶² Spectare V, Z

⁶⁶³ aut N, V

⁶⁶⁴ Papiæ V

[48] When the King heard about the frequent disagreements between us and the Supreme Pontiff, he often intervened for the sake of peace and begged now you, now the Supreme Pontiff to end the controversy. What Simon⁶⁶⁵ and his colleagues call for is precisely that the Council should meet with the Pope and that all the fuels of conflict be eliminated. Who could take offense at this? Don't you all desire the same thing? Are these words not just and holy? Don't you all desire the same thing? For my own part, I must certainly commend this knight. What Simons asks is good and worthy of being granted. For he admonishes us to avoid grounds for a schism, he asks us as to agree a location with the Pope, and he does not recommend or reject any place by name. If I am not mistaken, his words advise us to choose Pavia⁶⁶⁶. For he wants the Pope and the Council to be together, joined in concord. This can be achieved in three ways: either the Pope gets his way, or you get your way, or some compromise is reached. To hope for the first two is pointless. Simon's mission concerns the third way: that a location should be chosen in agreement. And, I ask you, what location is more agreeable than Pavia, what is more suitable or convenient for both parties? Another location would possibly be more welcome to the Pope, but then it would not be safe for you.

⁶⁶⁵ Simon Charles

⁶⁶⁶ Piccolomini – and his audience - must have known that this contention was quite preposterous. The King of France evidently favoured a French city as the location of the Council, in casu Avignon, but he was too polite or clever to say so directly

[49] Sed {7v} nondum Simonem audivi dicentem, ut insecure eligatis locum, quod nec⁶⁶⁷ ipse diceret, nec suo regi in mentem caderet, cujus ea semper consuetudo fuit, ut prius consuleret, deinde⁶⁶⁸ concilio iudicium dimitteret, suumque sensum universalis ecclesiae postponeret opinioni. Quamquam, si licet dicere, nimium⁶⁶⁹ vos hodie, patres, defertis principibus, nec quidquam audetis agere, quod principibus non libuerit. Quod ego sane non laudo, quoniam non sic maiores nostros invenio factitasse, nec sic se apostolos⁶⁷⁰ habuisse, qui licet⁶⁷¹ totum contra se mundum haberent, veritatem tamen ubique praedicabant, neque minas, neque mortem, aut taeterrimos cruciatus pro veritate diffugiebant. Quibus rebus factum est, ut totum orbem Christianum nomen impleverit. Ubi vero mortis timor invasit, et divitiarum cupido supervenit, deserta veritas et incognita iustitia jacet. Aut verius cum Satyro⁶⁷² dixerimus⁶⁷³:

*Jam dudum ad superos **Astraea**⁶⁷⁴ recessit;
Hac comite **atque**⁶⁷⁵ duae pariter fugere⁶⁷⁶ sorores.*

Hinc⁶⁷⁷ diminutus populus Christianus, **et**⁶⁷⁸ auctae infidelium sectae.

⁶⁶⁷ neque N
⁶⁶⁸ denique Z
⁶⁶⁹ nimius V
⁶⁷⁰ ad populos V
⁶⁷¹ omit. V; etsi Z
⁶⁷² satyrio A
⁶⁷³ diximus Z
⁶⁷⁴ astra O, Z
⁶⁷⁵ ac R, V, Z
⁶⁷⁶ fugiere L, M
⁶⁷⁷ hrem V [sic!]
⁶⁷⁸ omit. V, Z

2.8. The relationship between the Princes and the Council

[49] But I have not yet heard Simon say that you should select an unsafe location: that he would not say, and his King would not think of it. His custom has ever been first to give advice and then to leave the decision to the Council thus subordinating his own opinion to the view of the Universal Church⁶⁷⁹. If I may say so, Fathers, today you defer unduly to the Princes, and you do not dare do anything that displeases them⁶⁸⁰. For my own part, I certainly do not approve of this attitude: I find that our forefathers did not act in this way, and neither did the Apostles. Though they had the whole world against them, they preached the truth everywhere, and in the cause of truth they fled neither from threats nor death nor cruel torture.⁶⁸¹ Thus it came about that the Christian name filled the whole world. But when fear of death and desire for riches came in, truth was deserted, and justice was flung to the ground and disregarded. The Satirical Poet⁶⁸² fittingly states that *It was afterwards that, little by little, Astraea withdrew to the gods above with Chastity as her companion. The two sisters ran away together.*⁶⁸³ Hereafter the Christian people went into decline, and the sects of the infidels⁶⁸⁴ increased.

⁶⁷⁹ Note the concept of the Universal Church, which is embodied by the Council

⁶⁸⁰ The Princes naturally had a keen interest in the Councils, the only truly international (European) assemblies at the time. They influenced them heavily through their ambassadors. Piccolomini probably expresses a general concern among Council members or at least of the presidency of the Council, otherwise he would hardly have dared to express this sentiment

⁶⁸¹ An early expression of Pius' admiration for the primitive Church: a theme which recurs in his writings and in one of the most important speeches of his papacy, *Sextus agitur annus*, cf. Pius II: *Commentarii*, pp. 764 ff.

⁶⁸² Satyrus = Decimus Junius Juvenalis: Roman poet (active in the late 1st and early 2nd century AD). Juvenal was one of Piccolomini's favourite classical authors

⁶⁸³ Juvenal: *Satirae*, 6, 19-20. Quoted after the Loeb edition of 2004

⁶⁸⁴ i.e. the muhammedans

[50] Vere ille riteque olim dicebat archiepiscopus Mediolanensis, quem hoc in templo sepultum habetis, vere multi alii. “Agamus,” inquiebat ille, “quod nobis et justitia dignum est. Quidquid exinde sequatur⁶⁸⁵, aequo patiamur animo.” Cujus vel mortui verba ne contemnite, oro⁶⁸⁶. Agite quod dignum hac congregatione putatis. Nemo vos deseret, nemo adversus erit. Cuncti vobis principes favebunt bene facientibus. Sic Caesareum culmen Augustalemque majestatem vobiscum habebitis⁶⁸⁷. Sic Francorum, sic **alii**⁶⁸⁸ ex ordine reges vobis parebunt. Et quantum ad locum attinet, nemo est principum, qui spernere Papiam debeat, ubi et papa optime et concilium valeat convenire. Nondum tamen excussimus quomodo Papiæ securum possit esse concilium; id enim ad ultimum orationis nostrae membrum reservavimus.

⁶⁸⁵ sequetur O

⁶⁸⁶ rogo D, L, M

⁶⁸⁷ habetis V

⁶⁸⁸ omit. V, Z

[50] The Archbishop of Milan⁶⁸⁹, who lies buried in this very temple⁶⁹⁰ like many others, once spoke very justly on this subject, and many others agree with him: *“Let us do,”* he said, *“what is worthy of ourselves and of justice. And whatever follows we shall bear with equanimity”*. I ask you: do not reject his words even if he is dead. Do what you think is worthy of this assembly. Nobody will desert you, nobody will oppose you. All the princes will favour you as long as you pursue a good course. His Imperial Highness and August Majesty⁶⁹¹ will support you. The French King and indeed all the other kings will follow you. And concerning the location, no prince would reject Pavia for there the Pope and the Council may meet most conveniently.

We have not as yet discussed how the Council may be safe in Pavia for this topic we have reserved for the last part of the oration.

⁶⁸⁹ Bartolomeo della Capra: Archbishop of Milan (b. 1365, a. 1411, d. 1433). Died at the Council of Basel and is buried in the cathedral, where the Council met for its major sessions

⁶⁹⁰ Cf. Pius II: *Orationes*, p. 37, n. 14

⁶⁹¹ Sigismund: Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (b. 1368, k. 1387, e. 1433, d. 1438)

[51] Nunc⁶⁹² ad tertium transeamus. Hujus partis est ostendere non domos solum, sed victualia quoque ubertim suppetere, in qua **re**⁶⁹³ non multum erit negotii. Ipsa enim **res se**⁶⁹⁴ manifestat. Ut tamen de hac etiam parte disseramus⁶⁹⁵, ex toto dominio suo duci placet, ut quam velitis urbem eligatis. Quis nescit Galliam ipsam, quae circa Padum jacet, et esse et a Cicerone dici florem Italiae? Aut quis regionem illam cum aliis aequiparet⁶⁹⁶ agris? Cum hujus tanta ubertas, tantaque feracitas⁶⁹⁷ sit, ut semper abunde **suppleverit**⁶⁹⁸, quamvis jam⁶⁹⁹ multis non dico annis, sed saeculis continuo sit bello agitata. Alibi vero nonnullae provinciae sunt adeo steriles⁷⁰⁰, adeo infecundae, ut non suscepto {8r} bello, sed audito belli nomine exauriantur. Hic vero plurimae sunt urbes recipiendo concilio et alendo sufficientes. Nam ut Mediolanum taceamus, urbem populosissimam, quae, ut semper fuit, sic modo caput est⁷⁰¹ Insubrium. Quid de Papia, Placentia, Parma, Cremona dixerimus?

⁶⁹² *margin note:* Tertia orationis pars A

⁶⁹³ *omit.* V, Z

⁶⁹⁴ *res se* : *sese res* V, Z

⁶⁹⁵ *dixeramus* V

⁶⁹⁶ *Equiparet* A, B, C, D, O, R; *aequiparat* V

⁶⁹⁷ *fertilitas* Z

⁶⁹⁸ *suppleverint* V, Z

⁶⁹⁹ *tam* C

⁷⁰⁰ *fertiles* Z (sic!)

⁷⁰¹ *caput est:* *est caput* L, M

3. Pavia can provide accomodation and provisions

[51] Let us now move on to the third part. As it is self-evident, I shall have no difficulty in showing that Pavia can provide not only accomodation, but also abundant food. So, I shall say just a few words in this respect:

The Duke has decided that you can choose any city you want within the whole of his dominion. Who does not know that the part of Gaul which surrounds the river Po is - and indeed is said by Cicero to be - the flower of Italy? Who will liken this region to other territories? Its fertility and feracity are so great that it has always yielded abundant crops even though it has been plagued continuously by wars not just for years, but for centuries. By contrast, many provinces elsewhere are so barren and infertile that they are completely drained by war, nay, by the mere mention of war! In this region there are many cities capable of accommodating and feeding the Council. We shall not even mention Milan, that populous city, which is, as always, the capital of Lombardy. What shall I say about Pavia, Piacenza, Parma, and Cremona⁷⁰²?

⁷⁰² Other cities in Lombardy

[52] Omissis aliis Papiam expendamus. Est profecto illa urbs splendidis⁷⁰³ commodissimisque ornata domibus. Testes voco ex hac contione quamplurimos, qui me, si mentiar⁷⁰⁴, reprehendant: Notam namque⁷⁰⁵ rem dico. Hic moderni⁷⁰⁶ genitor ducis cohabitavit, Princeps omnium sua aetate consultissimus. Hic curiam continuo tenuit, quam magni domini omnisque⁷⁰⁷ fere nobilitas Italiae sequebantur⁷⁰⁸. Ob quam rem multa ingentia palatia et amplissimae sunt aedes aedificatae. Curiales namque, ut fit, certatim sibi magnificas construebant domos, quod⁷⁰⁹ quisque ditior⁷¹⁰, quod⁷¹¹ quisque mundior videri volebat.

⁷⁰³ splendidissimis D, L, M

⁷⁰⁴ mentior V

⁷⁰⁵ Notam namque: notamque C

⁷⁰⁶ modernus V

⁷⁰⁷ omnis C

⁷⁰⁸ sequebatur Z

⁷⁰⁹ quid V

⁷¹⁰ dictior V

⁷¹¹ quid V

3.1. Accommodation

[52] Here, we shall only speak of Pavia. This city is adorned with splendid and commodious buildings. I call to witness many members of this assembly, who will rebuke me if I am lying, for it is a well-known fact. Here, the father⁷¹² of the present Duke, the wisest Prince of his age, had his second residence. Here, he held court continuously, and many great lords and almost the entire nobility of Italy attended it. Therefore, many grand palaces and large houses have been built there, for the courtiers – as always - vied with each other in raising stately homes, for everyone wanted appear more wealthy and splendid than others.

⁷¹² Gian Galeazzo Visconti: Duke of Milan (b. 1351, Duke 1395, d. 1402)

[53] Illic palatium est quod Castellum **appellant**⁷¹³ ingenti fossa circumdatum, de
 cujus amplitudine illud retulisse **sufficiat**⁷¹⁴, quod augustalis pontificalisque curiae
 capax existimetur, cujus pulchritudinem ac commoditatem omnis oratio com-
 minuere videatur. Hinc urbi adjacet, illinc ducali viridario supereminet, operi
 omnium maximo atque excellentissimo, cui Parco est nomen venationibus
 piscationibusque constructo, ubi feras innumerabiles viginti millia passuum⁷¹⁵
 complexus **murus**⁷¹⁶ observat. De cujus rei amoenitate ac voluptate⁷¹⁷ nonnulla
 dissererem, nisi omnem a vobis contemni voluptatem⁷¹⁸ deliciasque omnes⁷¹⁹
 parvi⁷²⁰ aestimari⁷²¹ **cognossem**⁷²².

⁷¹³ vocant V, Z

⁷¹⁴ sufficit V, Z

⁷¹⁵ passum A

⁷¹⁶ omit. V, Z

⁷¹⁷ ac voluptate omit. V

⁷¹⁸ contemni voluptatem : voluptatem contemni Z

⁷¹⁹ omnis A, B, C, D, L, V

⁷²⁰ ... [sic!] V

⁷²¹ existimari D, L, M, O; extimari Z

⁷²² cognoscerem V, Z

[53] Here is a palace called the Castello⁷²³, surrounded by an enormous moat. Concerning its size, suffice it to say that it is thought to be capable of accommodating the imperial or the papal court. Its beauty and convenience are so great that words cannot do them justice. On the one side lies the city, on the other the ducal gardens, a large and magnificent establishment called the Parco⁷²⁴. It has been created for hunting and fishing, and it contains innumerable wild animals. The whole complex is surrounded by a wall which measures 20.000 passus. I would speak at length about the charm and the pleasantness of this place if I did not know that you disparage pleasures and do not care for enjoyment.

⁷²³ Castello Visconteo: castle built in 1360

⁷²⁴ The famous park where the battle of Pavia between the French and the Spaniards took place in 1525, resulting in the defeat and capture of the French King, Francis I

[54] Vino praeterea cunctisque edulibus⁷²⁵ adjacens patria maxime abundat. Nec⁷²⁶ Varronem⁷²⁷ in illa audio prorumpentem verba: *Optima ad victum fert ager Campanus*⁷²⁸ *frumentum, Falernus*⁷²⁹ *vinum, Casinas oleum, Tusculanus ficum, mel Tarentinus, piscem Tybris.*⁷³⁰ Haec suo forsitan tempore ita erant. Modo haec omnia Papienses habent, ceterique Longobardorum populi, foeni et bladi⁷³¹ plus legunt, quam ipsi cupiant⁷³² cives. Omnis pomi copia est ingens. Quidquid abest, Ticini flumen advectare potest. Sed quid⁷³³ immoror? Insubres, ut scitis, populi numquam externo tritico victitarunt, sed suum⁷³⁴ ipsi ceteris provinciis subministrarunt. Quo fit, ut summam semper in Papia victualium copiam sitis habituri. Nec aliquis Italus vobis minori pretio victum dabit. Nolo probare quod per se patet. Sed quaerite alias urbes, et rerum pretia investigate. Quod⁷³⁵ tribus denariis alibi emetis, duorum hic denariorum pretium habebit. Neque disputatione res indiget, quod⁷³⁶ taxationem rerum vestro iudicio dux committit, frustra de fertilitate patriae urbisque commoditate sermonem⁷³⁷ facio, quod omnia illa maiora esse cognoscitis, {8v} quam ego dicam.

⁷²⁵ eduliis D, L, M

⁷²⁶ haec N, R

⁷²⁷ vaporem [sic!] V

⁷²⁸ Campanum V

⁷²⁹ Falernas V

⁷³⁰ Tyberis L, M; tribus V

⁷³¹ pani O

⁷³² cupiunt N

⁷³³ hic *add.* V

⁷³⁴ suis V

⁷³⁵ Que O, R

⁷³⁶ quare M

⁷³⁷ omit. B, R

3.2. Provisions

[54] The neighbouring country overflows with wine and all kinds of foodstuffs. I will not heed the words gushing forth from Varro⁷³⁸: *Campanian lands bear the best grain for our use, Falernum the best wine, Casinum the best oil, Tusculum the best figs, Tarentum the best honey, and the Tiber the best fish.*⁷³⁹ It may have been so at his time, but today all these things are to be found in Pavia and the other regions of Lombardy. They gather more hay and grain than their own inhabitants need, and there is a great abundance of fruit. If anything should be lacking, it can be imported on the Ticino River. But why do I dwell on this? As you know, the peoples of Lombardy never have had to live on imported wheat, but on the contrary they exported their own wheat to the other provinces. Therefore you will always have a veritable abundance of foodstuffs in Pavia, and no other Italian will sell you food more cheaply. It should not be necessary to prove that which is manifest, but do ask the other cities and examine their prices: what you buy for three *denarii* elsewhere you will get for two in Pavia. The matter is beyond discussion. Even so, the Duke entrusts pricing to your own judgment. But it is superfluous for me to speak about the fertility of the country and the advantages of the city for you know that they are greater than I can say.

⁷³⁸ Marcus Terentius Varro: Roman writer (116 BC – 27 BC)

⁷³⁹ The quote is not directly from Varro, but from Macrobius citing Varro in his *Saturnalia*, 3, 16, 12: *Quod equidem cur ita illis visum sit ignoro: fuisse autem etiam M. Varro ostendit, qui enumerans, quae in quibus Italiae partibus optima ad victum gignantur, pisci Tiberino palmam tribuit his verbis in libro Rerum humanarum undecimo: Ad victum optima fert ager Campanus frumentum, Falernus vinum, Cassinas oleum, Tusculanus ficum, mel Tarentinus, piscem Tiberis ..* Quoted from the Loeb edition of 2011

[55] Illa vero parvipendo, quae dicuntur, oportere Graecos Latinam ecclesiam magnificam invenire. Quod tamen si quid habet momenti, ubi melius quam in Papia reperietis⁷⁴⁰? Quo enim honore, qua magnificentia, qua pompa, quo sumptu Constantinopolitanum imperatorem ab duce recipi aestimatis⁷⁴¹? An quisquam⁷⁴² vivit hoc duce ad sumptum effusior aut ad magnificentiam animatior? De cujus largitionibus stupenda magis quam credibilis narratio videretur. Cui liberalitatem aliquam exercenti sua solum voluntas sufficit. Videbunt hujus principis excellentiam Graeci singulari quadam admiratione ac stupore, idque oculis perspicient^{743 744}, quod auribus aliquando cognoverant⁷⁴⁵. Verumque illud Homeri experientur dicentis: **famam**⁷⁴⁶ *numquam penitus vanam esse, quam populi multi decantant*. Immo et rem fama majorem invenient. Ibunt nonnumquam Mediolanum, ubi populum numerosum, ubi opulentissimos cives, ubi florentissimas opes agnoscent, ubi alterum paene orbem videre videbuntur. Tot artifices, tot pompas numquam satis spectasse dicent. Quod si magnificentia venerabilem reddit ecclesiam, illa est potissime civitas eligenda.

⁷⁴⁰ invenietis M

⁷⁴¹ extimatis V

⁷⁴² est *add.* O

⁷⁴³ oculis perspicient : perspicent oculis Z

⁷⁴⁴ perspicient D, L, M, O, V

⁷⁴⁵ cognoverunt Z

⁷⁴⁶ famamque V, Z

3.3. Splendour of Pavia and Milan

[55] I do not attach importance to the contention that the Greeks ought to meet a grandiose Latin Church. But if this argument should carry any weight, then where can you find magnificence better than in Pavia? Just think of how honourably, how splendidly, how solemnly, and how extravagantly the Duke would receive the Emperor of Constantinople⁷⁴⁷. Or is there any other man who lives in a more costly or magnificent fashion than this Duke? An account of his largess would seem more stupendous than credible. When he shows generosity, he does it at his own behest. The Greeks will behold the grandeur of this Prince with admiration and awe, and with their own eyes they shall see what they had already heard. Then they will acknowledge the truth of the Homeric saying that *a reputation is never quite false if it is sung*⁷⁴⁸ *by many people*.⁷⁴⁹ Here, indeed, they shall find that reality surpasses reputation. Sometimes the Greeks would go to Milan, and there they would see a large population, wealthy citizens, and great splendour; they would almost believe that what they see is another world! They would say that never have they seen so many artists nor so many fabulous events. So, if it is grandeur that makes the Church venerable, Milan would really be the best location.⁷⁵⁰

⁷⁴⁷ Johannes VIII Palaiologos

⁷⁴⁸ i.e. praised

⁷⁴⁹ This is a direct quote from Leonardi Bruni: *De Militia*, 1422: *Fama autem, ut inquit Homerus, nunquam penitus vana est, quam populi multi decantant*. Bruni, p. 384. Cf. Homer: *Odyssey*, 19, 333-334: *But if one be blameless and have a blameless heart, his fame do strangers bear far and wide among all men*. Translation quoted after the Loeb ed. of 1960. Cf. Peter Thiermann: *Die Orationes Homeri des Leonardi Bruno Aretino*, Leiden 1993, p. 385. According to Thiermann, the quote refers to Homer's *Odyssey*, 24, 196 ff.: *Therefore the fame of her [Penelope's] virtue shall never perish, but the immortals shall make among men on earth a pleasant song in honour of constant Penelope*. Quoted after the Loeb edition of 1960. The quote is a testimony of Piccolomini's usage of Bruni, whom he much admired

⁷⁵⁰ Here Piccolomini possibly sends up a "test balloon" for the choice of Milan itself as the venue for the Council. It would, of course, have been an international scoop for Milan, but it was quite out of the question as the other Italian powers would never agree

[56] Sed vana sunt haec, mihi credite, **anilesque**⁷⁵¹ delirationes⁷⁵². Non sunt Graeci extra orbem positi, qui Latinum genus Latinasque vires ignorent. Mediterranei sunt populi, Jonio⁷⁵³ brevi freto ab Italia discreti. Quattuor **namque**⁷⁵⁴ et viginti horis secundum⁷⁵⁵ pelagus secundus facit ventus, quod a Brundisio⁷⁵⁶ in Epirum pergit. Siciliamque olim **Graeciam**⁷⁵⁷ fuisse, totamque Calabriam Magnam Graeciam appellatam, nemo qui veteres **lectitat**⁷⁵⁸, ignorabit. Romaeque tantam Graecorum fuisse⁷⁵⁹ multitudinem, ut in illa Iuvenalis verba proruperit⁷⁶⁰: *Non possum ferre, Quirites, Graecam urbem*. Sed ne longius a proposito divertamus, illud mihi satis probatum videtur, quod de rerum copia domorumque commoditate requirebatur.

⁷⁵¹ inanes V, Z

⁷⁵² delectationes V

⁷⁵³ *omit.* V; Adriatico Z

⁷⁵⁴ enim V, Z

⁷⁵⁵ secundus V

⁷⁵⁶ Brundusio V

⁷⁵⁷ Graecam O, V, Z

⁷⁵⁸ lectitarit V, Z

⁷⁵⁹ Graecorum fuisse: fuisse Graecorum L, M, O

⁷⁶⁰ prorumperit O; prorumpit R

[56] But, believe me, such concerns are empty and foolish. The Greeks do not live in another world: they know the Latin people and the Latin strength. They are a Mediterranean people, only separated from Italy by the narrow Ionian Strait. With a favourable wind it takes only 24 hours to cross the sea from Brindisi⁷⁶¹ to Epirus⁷⁶². Everybody who reads the ancients knows that Sicily was once Greek and that the whole of Calabria⁷⁶³ was called Greater Greece⁷⁶⁴. Actually, there were so many Greeks in Rome that Juvenal exclaimed: *My fellow-citizens*⁷⁶⁵, *I cannot stand a Greekified Rome.*⁷⁶⁶ But so as not to stray further from the subject: I have now sufficiently demonstrated, as required, that there will be abundant provisions and commodious premises in Pavia.

⁷⁶¹ Brindisi: Brindisi is situated at a natural harbor that penetrates deeply into the Adriatic coast of Puglia

⁷⁶² Epirus: a historical and geographical region of the southwestern Balkans, straddling modern Greece and Albania

⁷⁶³ Calabria: region in southern Italy, south of Naples

⁷⁶⁴ Magna Graecia: the name of the coastal areas of Southern Italy on the Tarentine Gulf that were extensively colonized by Greek settlers

⁷⁶⁵ Quirites: the earliest term for the citizens of Rome

⁷⁶⁶ Juvenal, *Satirae*, 3, 60. Quoted from the Loeb edition of 2004

[57] De⁷⁶⁷ postremo jam membro tempus admonet disputare: de securitate scilicet⁷⁶⁸ libertateque loci, quae duplici a nobis modo considerata videntur: ut tuti in loco simus, et ad locum tuti eamus.

[58] **Refero**⁷⁶⁹ de secundo, in quo illud non est ignorandum, quod huic urbi nullum propiorem locum nominamus⁷⁷⁰. Septem dierum iter de cuius securitate nulla, ut opinor,⁷⁷¹ est ambiguitas. Jacent medii Suizerorum⁷⁷² campi sive, ut verius dicamus, alpes, hominum cum⁷⁷³ bellicosissimorum⁷⁷⁴, tum etiam pacis et justitiae⁷⁷⁵ tenacissimorum, quorum terras percurrentibus⁷⁷⁶ vobis nulla latronum violentia sit **timenda**⁷⁷⁷. Montem vero sancti Bernardi transituris religiosissimi principis ducis Sabaudiae territorium occurrit⁷⁷⁸, qui pacis semper amator cultorque tranquillitatis {9r} est habitus, quem religio sanctissimaque justitia cunctis subditis miro modo colendum divinisque quodammodo laudibus celebrandum efficit, cuius terras nemo non secure percurrit.

⁷⁶⁷ *margin note*: Ultima pars orationis A

⁷⁶⁸ *omit.* N

⁷⁶⁹ incipio V, Z

⁷⁷⁰ nominavimus M

⁷⁷¹ nulla, ut opinor: ut opinor, nulla D, L, M

⁷⁷² Suitensium D, L, M

⁷⁷³ tum V

⁷⁷⁴ bellicosorum B, R

⁷⁷⁵ justitia N

⁷⁷⁶ procurrentibus O

⁷⁷⁷ Per *add.* V, Z

⁷⁷⁸ territorium occurrit: occurrit territorium L, M

4. Pavia offers security and freedom

[57] It is now time to consider the last part of my subject that is the security and the freedom of the place. There are two aspects to this matter: firstly, we must be able to stay there in safety, and, secondly, we must be able to travel thither in safety.

4.1. It is safe to travel to Pavia

[58] I start with the second issue. Everybody knows that we have named the city that is closest to us. The journey only takes seven days, and I think that there can be no doubt about its safety. Between Pavia and us lies the territory of the Swiss, or, to be more precise, the Alps⁷⁷⁹. The Swiss are rather a pugnacious people, but they are also fiercely beholden to peace and justice, and you will not have to fear any violence from robbers when you travel through their territory. When you pass over the Mountain of Saint Bernhard⁷⁸⁰, you will enter the territory of that most God-fearing Prince, the Duke of Savoy⁷⁸¹, who has always been considered a Prince who loves peace and cherishes tranquility. His piety and inviolate justice makes him extremely popular with all his subjects and worthy of almost divine praise. Everybody may pass through his territories in complete safety.

⁷⁷⁹ The Alps

⁷⁸⁰ Great Saint-Bernard-Pass

⁷⁸¹ Amédée VIII: Duke of Savoy (b. 1383, Duke 1416, anti-Pope 1439, d. 1451). In 1439 the Council elected him (anti-) Pope under the name of Felix V. Piccolomini himself became his secretary

[59] Ex his duobus territoriis nullo intersecante domino in terras ipsius Philippi⁷⁸² descenditis⁷⁸³ vobis non modo tutas, sed amicissimas. Ac si cui timendum videtur, offeruntur a principe arces singulae, quas vestrum iter securius aestimabitis⁷⁸⁴ esse **facturas**⁷⁸⁵. En cernitis ducale territorium in faucibus Galliarum et Alamanniae⁷⁸⁶ constitutum⁷⁸⁷, ut quamprimum intretis Italiam, ducales arces occurrant. Nec procul ab alpihus Papiam **inveniatis**⁷⁸⁸ jacentem. Quae res faciunt, ut securitatem ad⁷⁸⁹ locum tutissimam⁷⁹⁰ habeatis, qualem si qui alii praestent, ipsi judicetis.

⁷⁸² Mariae *add.* O

⁷⁸³ descenditis L; descendetis M

⁷⁸⁴ estimabitis V

⁷⁸⁵ *omit.* V, Z

⁷⁸⁶ Almanie A, B, D, R; Alamaniæ C, L, O, V

⁷⁸⁷ constitutis Z

⁷⁸⁸ invenietis O, V, Z

⁷⁸⁹ ac V

⁷⁹⁰ tutissimum V

[59] From these two territories⁷⁹¹ you will pass directly into the country of Filip himself, that is not only safe, but also very well-disposed towards you. And if anybody should still have some concerns in this respect, the Prince offers you any fortresses that you think will make your travel safer. The Duke's territory lies in the narrow area between Gaul and Germany, so that as soon as you enter Italy, you meet the ducal fortresses. And Pavia lies not far from the Alps. For these reasons you may have a very safe journey to Pavia. You can yourselves judge whether it is equally safe to travel to other places.

⁷⁹¹ i.e. The Swiss Alps and Savoy

[60] In⁷⁹² loco jam restat securitatem ac libertatem ostendere, quas esse Papiae confitebimini, si vestra esse in manu civitatem ostendero; si quietos placidosque cives monstravero; si salubrem aerem docuero; et si vos de principe commonuero⁷⁹³ posse confidere.

⁷⁹² *margin note:* Subdivisio quaedam A
⁷⁹³ compromitto V

4.2. It is safe to stay in Pavia

[60] It now remains to deal with the question of security and independence. You will acknowledge that these are to be had in Pavia if I can demonstrate to you that

- * the city will be under your own control;
- * its citizens are peace-loving and tranquil;
- * the climate is healthy; and
- * you can trust the Prince.

[61] Futuram in manu vestra⁷⁹⁴ civitatem jam supra edoctum⁷⁹⁵ est, nec solum urbem, sed adjacentia simul oppida, arcesque daturum se ducem intellexistis. Nec dubium est, quin de se quisque magis quam de altero confidat, quamvis⁷⁹⁶ aliqui dicant non esse praelatos ad regendas urbes accommodos⁷⁹⁷, dominiaque civitatum male a sacerdotibus regi contendant⁷⁹⁸. Quod a Bohemica dementia tabificoque Hussitarum errore non multum abest, qui omni, ut scitis, dominio spoliandos sacerdotes asseverabant. Et quis, oro, melius aut rectius urbes gubernavit Martino V.? Nolo alios numerare pontifices: longus ordo sese praelatorum offerret, qui magnis praesidentes urbibus subditos in pace ac⁷⁹⁹ justitia pulcherrime tenuerunt. Dicere **vero**⁸⁰⁰ ineptos fore ad regimen sacerdotes, nihil est aliud quam vos omnes contemnere, Constantinumque Caesarem reprehendere, cujus munere civitatum dominia suscepistis. Sileant ergo, qui talia submurmurant, neque vos condemnent⁸⁰¹, qui petendas arces oratoribus commisistis. In potestate igitur civitatem habebitis, custodes arcibus imponetis, officiales quoslibet ordinabitis, juramentum fidelitatis recipietis. Et ubi, obsecro, liberius esse potestis? Ubi tutius? Aliam quoque securitatem⁸⁰², si quam petieritis, facile impetratu erit.

⁷⁹⁴ manu vestra : vestra manu O

⁷⁹⁵ dictum M

⁷⁹⁶ cum vix M

⁷⁹⁷ accomodatos V

⁷⁹⁸ civitatum ... contendant : cum tantum malum a sacerdotibus exit V, Z [V has cui instead of cum]

⁷⁹⁹ atque V

⁸⁰⁰ omit. V, Z

⁸⁰¹ contemnunt B, C, R, O

⁸⁰² quoque securitatem : securitatem quoque Z

4.2.1. *The Council may have control of Pavia*

[61] I have already shown that the city itself will be under your control, and, as you have heard, the Duke will also entrust you with the neighbouring towns and fortresses.

There is no doubt that you can trust him more than so many others, who claim that prelates are not suitable for ruling cities and who allege that towns are badly governed by priests⁸⁰³. This is not far from the Bohemian madness and the virulent errors of the Hussites⁸⁰⁴ who claimed that all temporal power should be taken away from the clergy. But who governed cities better and more justly than Martin V.⁸⁰⁵? I shall not list other pontiffs, for there is a long line of prelates who governed great cities and ruled their subjects admirably and in peace and justice. To say that priests are unfit for government is tantamount to showing disrespect towards all of you and to rebuke the Emperor Constantine⁸⁰⁶ who granted you the government of cities⁸⁰⁷. Let those who whisper such things be silent and not blame you because you have asked your envoys to require fortresses.

So the city will be in your power; you will assign commanders to the fortresses; you will appoint officials; you will receive the oath of allegiance. So where, I ask, may you have greater freedom? Where will you have greater safety? And should you want even more security you will obtain it easily.

⁸⁰³ There was widespread dissatisfaction, not least in the Papal State, with priestly rule, i.e. government by Popes and bishops, and the secular Princes subject to this rule constantly tried to free themselves of it and become independent rulers. It is remarkable that Piccolomini defends priestly rule since he was at that time not very clerically minded. But speaking to an assembly of prelates, many of whom had secular government of their areas, he must have felt that it would be politic to speak in favour of priestly rule

⁸⁰⁴ A religious movement in Bohemia following the teachings of Jan Hus (c. 1369-1415) and challenging many tenets and dogmas of the Roman Church. It became one of the forerunners of the Reformation

⁸⁰⁵ Martin V: Pope (b. 1368, p. 1417, d. 1431)

⁸⁰⁶ Constantine: Roman emperor (b. 272, e. 306, d. 337)

⁸⁰⁷ A falsified medieval document, The Donation of Constantine, purported to be a decree of the Emperor Constantine, by which he donates large territories and Rome itself to the Popes. It was considered to constitute the legal base of priestly government. Already during the period of the Council of Basel, the authenticity of the documents was being challenged by humanists (Nikolaus von Kues, and later Lorenzo Valla), and Piccolomini soon accepted their arguments. Instead, he referred to later donations of land to the Popes by Princes and nobles

[62] Civium modo naturam examinemus⁸⁰⁸, quae pro vestra securitate non est parum considerata⁸⁰⁹. Plenum namque periculi est inter cives vivere, qui ipsi⁸¹⁰ inter se divisi discordiosique sint, qui nullo inter se pacto cohaereant. Talibus enim in civitatibus necesse est saepe immutari regimina: nunc unum esse, nunc alium principatum. {9v} Neque innovari sine discrimine res possunt, et quemadmodum ait Comicus: *Non fit sine periculo magnum facinus et memorabile*. Quod intelligo non solum eorum, qui agunt, sed spectantium etiam.

[63] Sed nihil horum in urbe Papiensi⁸¹¹ trepidabit⁸¹². Est enim populus **pacicolus**⁸¹³, quieti et otio deditus, cives perurbani, non belli aut intestinarum avidi discordiarum, sed suis occupati possessionibus, plurimum tempus in agricultura consumunt, et juxta⁸¹⁴ Graecum proverbium, *quam quisque artem novit in hac se exercet*. Nec vano libertatis nomine gloriantur quemadmodum aliqui, qui tum se liberos vocant, cum maxime serviunt, et subesse quampluribus⁸¹⁵ liberum fore dicunt. Ego vero quietiorem populo Papiensi nullum adhuc reperi⁸¹⁶, qui et suo⁸¹⁷ semper principi oboedivit, et devotissimus ecclesiae fuit.

⁸⁰⁸ naturam examinemus : nostram examinemus naturam V

⁸⁰⁹ considerare M

⁸¹⁰ omit. N

⁸¹¹ Papiensium L, M

⁸¹² trepidabitur M [misreading of abbreviation for -is in L, cf. moderni genitor regis, fol. 14v]

⁸¹³ placidus L, M; pacificus V, Z

⁸¹⁴ iuxta V

⁸¹⁵ pluribus V

⁸¹⁶ repperi B, C, D, L, N, O

⁸¹⁷ omit. O

4.2.2. *The citizens of Pavia are peace-loving and tranquil*

[62] Let us look for a moment at the character of the citizens. This is clearly relevant to your security for it is highly risky to live among citizens who are divided and contentious and who can in no way become reconciled. In such cities there are of necessity frequent political changes: now they have one leadership, now another⁸¹⁸. However, political changes are never without risk, and as the Comic Poet⁸¹⁹ says: *You can't do anything big or brilliant without risk.*⁸²⁰ This applies not only to the actors, but also to the bystanders.

[63] None of this you have to fear in the city of Pavia. It is a peace-loving people, given to quietness and tranquility. The citizens are perfectly civilized and do not want war or civil discord. They are occupied with their own business and spend most of their time on agriculture. They live according to the Greek proverb *The art which each man knows, in this let he employ himself.*⁸²¹ They are not vainly boasting of the name of liberty as others do who call themselves free when in reality they are slaves, and who believe that freedom is to have many masters. Personally, I have never seen a quieter people than the Pavians: they have always been obedient to their own Prince, and they are highly devoted to the Church⁸²².

⁸¹⁸ This is an early statement of Piccolomini/Pius' inveterate disdain of democratic government and the common people. His views on this matter were probably influenced by the history of Siena, where the popular party in the 14th century expelled the noble families, including the Piccolomini, both from power and from the city itself. Afterwards the Piccolomini family fell into poverty and insignificance, from which it was saved only by their illustrious member, our Piccolomini himself, as he rose to be a Prince of the Empire and of the Church and finally to the Papal Throne

⁸¹⁹ Comicus = Publius Terentius Afer: Roman playwright (195/185 – 159 BC), better known in English as Terence, He was one of Piccolomini's favourite classical authors

⁸²⁰ Terentius, *Heautontimoroumenos*, 314. Quoted from the Loeb edition of 1994

⁸²¹ Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 1, 18, 41. Quoted from the Loeb edition of 1927

⁸²² i.e. both to their secular and religious rulers

[64] Aeris nunc salubritas pernoscatur, quem purissimum **esse**⁸²³ apud Ticinium⁸²⁴ reperietis. Nullae ibi foedae paludes exhalant, non maritima stagna putredinem suggerunt, non crebrae pestes invadunt, non aestus⁸²⁵ immensi intemperatique solares radii aut montani venti officiunt sanitati. Quod si Basileae similem quaerimus civitatem, Papia profecto est, quae Basiliensem⁸²⁶ nobis et libertatem et sanitatem praestet, quam hic permaximam sumus experti. Nam sive aeris salubritas fuit, sive miraculosa magni Dei bonitas **id**⁸²⁷ concessit, sextum hic⁸²⁸ jam trahentes annum incredibili omnes sanitate **perstitimus**⁸²⁹. Nec⁸³⁰ de libertate expedit disputare: libere enim hic loqui **libereque**⁸³¹ facere, quodcumque libuit, numquam estis prohibiti, nec cives vestris⁸³² se umquam actionibus opposuerunt, ut qui Germanicam nobilitatem redolent.

[65] De Germanorum namque fide, gravitate, constantia nihil satis explicare possem. Non sunt ad promittendum faciles, sed promissa inconcusse inviolateque custodiunt. Emori⁸³³ malunt, quam juramento deficere. Apud quos facile sit multos Attilio Regulo similes invenire, qui primo Punico bello fidem hostibus prius⁸³⁴ servare voluit quam mortem et foedum corporis effugere laniatum. Haec profecto constantia Germanorum, haec fides, haec gravitas Alamanniae⁸³⁵, ut tenacissime fidem servant.

⁸²³ fore O, V

⁸²⁴ Ticinum L, M, O

⁸²⁵ insunt V

⁸²⁶ Basiliensibus Z

⁸²⁷ omit. V, Z

⁸²⁸ hinc R

⁸²⁹ praestitimus A, B, D, L, M, O, R, V

⁸³⁰ neque N

⁸³¹ et libere V, Z

⁸³² cives vestris : vestris cives O

⁸³³ Et mori Z

⁸³⁴ omit. C, D, L, M

⁸³⁵ Alamanniae M

4.2.3. *The climate of Pavia is healthy*

[64] Now, hear about the healthy air which is very clean around the River Ticino. No swamps give off fetid air; no stagnant waters stink of rotteness; they are not invaded by frequent plagues; their health is not threatened by immense heat or burning sunshine or mountain winds. If we seek a city similar to Basel, then indeed it is Pavia that will provide us with the same great independence and health as we have had in Basel. For whether it is an effect of the wholesome climate or the gift of our great God's miraculous goodness, the fact remains that we have now all been living here for more than five years and are in incredibly good health. It is superfluous to talk about liberty because we really can speak freely here, and everybody can do as he wishes. Nothing has ever been forbidden, and the citizens have never opposed your actions. In this they reflect the German nobility.

[65] For about the faithfulness, seriousness and steadfastness of the Germans I could never say enough. They do not make promises readily, but when they do, they keep them firmly and honestly. They would rather die than fail to keep an oath.⁸³⁶ Among the Germans it would be easy to find many like Attilius Regulus⁸³⁷, who during the first Punic War⁸³⁸ would rather keep faith with his enemies than flee death and horrible torture. Such, indeed, is the dependability of the Germans, such is the faithfulness and seriousness of Germany: they keep their promises firmly and honestly!

⁸³⁶ On the faithfulness of the Germans, cf. Tacitus: *Annales*, 13, 54: *nullos mortalium armis aut fide ante Germanos esse*

⁸³⁷ Marcus Atilius Regulus (c. 307 – c. 250).: Roman general and consul. Mentioned in Bruni: *De militia*, p. 384. Cf. Cicero: *De officiis*, 1, 13, 39

⁸³⁸ Punic wars: a series of three wars fought between Rome and Carthage from 264 to 146 BC

[66] Cujus rei memores Basilienses nihil vobis promissum commutarunt. Apud quos utinam quod restat negotii consummare possemus, ne⁸³⁹ aliorum fidem probaturi essemus. Si tamen pericula **volumus evitare**⁸⁴⁰, Papiensis nobis⁸⁴¹ est⁸⁴² civitas adeunda, ubi, quemadmodum dixi, et civium grata conversatio est et aeris perpetua salubritas.

⁸³⁹ ut R

⁸⁴⁰ volumus evitare : evitare volumus V, Z

⁸⁴¹ vobis O

⁸⁴² nobis est: est nobis M

[66] Being mindful of this, the people of Basel always stood by their promises to you. Therefore, I do wish that we could finish the business of the Council here in Basel and that we would not have to test the faithfulness of others. But if we wish to avoid danger, we must go to the city of Pavia, where, as I have said, the citizens live peacefully together, and the air is always wholesome.

[67] Si quando tamen mutare locum⁸⁴³ oporteret, non desunt in territorio principis commodissimae civitates, quarum, sicut de Papia est dictum, {10r} dominium haberetis. Neque enim⁸⁴⁴ futuri casus sunt a nobis non cogitandi, sed sicut apud Euripidem Theseus⁸⁴⁵ facere nos decet, cujus illa sunt verba a Cicerone⁸⁴⁶ in latinum conversa:

*Nam qui haec audita a docto meminisse viro,
Futuras mecum connitabar⁸⁴⁷ miserias,
Aut mortem acerbam, aut exilii moestam fugam,
Aut semper aliquam molem meditabar mali:
Ut si qua injecta diritas casu foret,
Ne me imparatum cura laceraret repens.*

Quae non ideo solum dicta **confirmo**⁸⁴⁸, ut malum fiat praemeditatione levius, sed ut praevidentes mala diffugiamus. Et quantum ad nos attinet, illud in eligendo loco desideremus, ut venientem pestem aliamve⁸⁴⁹ mali molem possimus evitare, sicut in urbe cernimus Papiensi, qua seu peste, seu alia causa dimittenda, aliam evestigio urbem inveniamus concilii capacem et rerum abundantem omnium. Ac de aeris salubritate sufficiat.

⁸⁴³ mutare locum: locum mutare L, M, O

⁸⁴⁴ omit. V

⁸⁴⁵ Teseus A, B

⁸⁴⁶ a Cicerone : per Ciceronem V

⁸⁴⁷ commentabar L, M

⁸⁴⁸ estimo O, Z; extimo V

⁸⁴⁹ aliam ne V

[67] If, however, we should have to find another place, there are in the territory of the Prince other convenient cities which you would have under your control, just like Pavia. For we also have to think of future eventualities, as Theseus⁸⁵⁰ does in Euripides⁸⁵¹ whose words Cicero translated into Latin thus:

*I treasured up what some learn'd sage did tell,
And on my future misery did dwell;
I thought of bitter death, of being drove
Far from my home by exile, and I strove
With every evil to possess my mind,
That, when they came, I the less care might find.*⁸⁵²

This means that we should not just foresee evils in order to make them easier to bear, but in order to flee them! In our case, we must choose a city that we can immediately exchange for another city capable of hosting the Council and amply provisioned. This might become necessary in case of the plague or for some other reason. Pavia certainly fulfills this condition. I have now said enough about the wholesome climate.

⁸⁵⁰ Theseus: Greek mythological hero

⁸⁵¹ Euripides: Greek tragedian (c. 480 – 406 BC). The tragedy itself is lost, but the above passage was quoted in Greek by Plutarch in his *Moralia*, 112D

⁸⁵² Cicero: *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 3, 14, 29. Quoted after the translation of C.D. Yonge. New York, Harper, 1877.

[68] Principis⁸⁵³ vero fides quanti a vobis, celeberrimi patres, sit habenda, extremo praesentique loco retinui. De qua re abunde **putavero dictum**⁸⁵⁴, cum ejus principis erga ecclesiam⁸⁵⁵ devotionem, erga vos ipsos sacrumque concilium dilectionem, erga subditos justitiam et **aequitatem**⁸⁵⁶, erga hostes clementiam et mansuetudinem, erga omnes magnificentiam et benignitatem ostendero. Quibus absolutis quis neget summam in **hoc**⁸⁵⁷ principe fidem **habendam**⁸⁵⁸? Quas res me nunc peroraturum⁸⁵⁹, utinam digna rebus sequeretur facundia. Meritus es namque, victoriosissime⁸⁶⁰ Princeps, de quo summi oratores et clarissima poetarum ingenia fatigentur. Sed dabis Aeneae⁸⁶¹ veniam, si non ut vellet, sed ut potest tuam causam perorabit. Vos quoque, patres amplissimi, desinite admirari, si non dignam tanto principe⁸⁶² orationem audietis; tot sunt enim illius stupendae virtutes, tot miranda gesta, tot pacis et belli incredibiles artes, ut inferior omnis oratio videri debeat. Sed pergo, ut in buccam⁸⁶³ venit.

⁸⁵³ *margin note:* Subdivisionis subdivisio A

⁸⁵⁴ putavero dictum : dictum putavero O, V, Z

⁸⁵⁵ ecclesiasticam V

⁸⁵⁶ equanimitatem V, Z

⁸⁵⁷ vos *add.* O, V, Z

⁸⁵⁸ habituros O, V, Z

⁸⁵⁹ oraturum V

⁸⁶⁰ gloriosissime O

⁸⁶¹ euge V; ante Z

⁸⁶² principi N

⁸⁶³ buccham A, B, O, R

4.3. The Council can trust the Duke

[68] I have kept for the end the question of how much, celebrated Fathers, you may trust the Prince, and of this I shall speak now and demonstrate to you

- * the devotion of the Prince to the Church,
- * his love of yourselves and the Sacred Council,
- * his justice and fairness towards his subjects,
- * his clemency and mildness towards his enemies, and
- * his generosity and benevolence towards all.

If I do that, then who will deny that you can trust this Prince implicitly? As I begin to speak about this, I hope that my eloquence will be worthy of the subject

For that is what you merit, oh victorious Prince! Even the greatest orators and the most excellent poets would find it hard to do justice to you, so I hope that you will forgive Aeneas⁸⁶⁴ if he speaks in your cause not as well as he would like to, but as well as he is able to. And you, great Fathers, do not be surprised if you will not hear an oration worthy of this great Prince. For, indeed, his admirable virtues, his memorable deeds, and his incredible skills of war and peace are so manyfold that no oration can do them justice. Nonetheless, I shall speak my mind simply and freely.

⁸⁶⁴ Piccolomini himself

[69] Ac de sua erga ecclesiam devotione duo quam brevissime absolvam. Braccius⁸⁶⁵, hostis ecclesiae immanissimus⁸⁶⁶, cum multa Romanae sedis oppida urbesque invasisset, ac multas provincias vi occupasset, urbem insignem Aquilam eo animo obsedit, ut ea capta bellum urbi obsidionemque⁸⁶⁷ admoveret⁸⁶⁸, tantusque in urbe metus ac trepidatio fuit, ut non urbis⁸⁶⁹ defendendae⁸⁷⁰, sed faciendae fugae consilium esse⁸⁷¹ putarent. Nec minor⁸⁷² agitatio Romae **tumultusque**⁸⁷³ fuit victore⁸⁷⁴ apud Cannas Hannibale omnique Romanorum prostrato exercitu, cum perditam spem fore desperatam complorataque rempublicam nonnulli juvenes opinati⁸⁷⁵ de aufugio cogitabant. Tum papae auxilia dux misit, pecuniisque copiisque papam jovit⁸⁷⁶. {10v} Cumque ad manum⁸⁷⁷ devenire, ducales copiae plurimum valuerunt eoque proelio victoriam pepererunt, ut victum Braccium duci ascriberent⁸⁷⁸. Omitto classem ingentem rogatu papae Martini in Apuliam destinata, Cajetamque⁸⁷⁹ receptam et alia classis illius spectata facinora.

⁸⁶⁵ Traccius V

⁸⁶⁶ inhumanissius O

⁸⁶⁷ obsedionemque C

⁸⁶⁸ amoveret D

⁸⁶⁹ urbem V

⁸⁷⁰ defendere V

⁸⁷¹ erat V

⁸⁷² major V

⁸⁷³ timorque V, Z

⁸⁷⁴ victorie A, B, R [NB: a fault in R corrected in C and D]

⁸⁷⁵ omit. L, M

⁸⁷⁶ imnit [sic!] V

⁸⁷⁷ manus V

⁸⁷⁸ adscriberent M

⁸⁷⁹ Cajetam N

4.3.1. The Duke's devotion to the Church

[69] Concerning the Duke's devotion to the Church, I shall briefly mention two points:

[Firstly,] when Braccio⁸⁸⁰, that terrible enemy of the Church, had invaded many towns and cities belonging to the Roman See and occupied many of its provinces, he laid siege to the splendid city of Aquila⁸⁸¹. His intention was to capture that city and then move the war and the siege to Rome. So great were the fear and trembling in that city that they thought less about defense than about flight. The uproar and disorder in Rome were just as great as when Hannibal⁸⁸² had won the Battle of Cannae⁸⁸³ and the whole of the Roman army had been destroyed: all hope was lost, the situation of the state was desperate and lamented, and many of the young men planned to flee. Then the Duke sent help to the Pope and aided him with money and troops. When they joined battle⁸⁸⁴, the ducal troops prevailed and gained the victory, and the Duke was credited with the defeat of Braccio.

I shall omit the immense fleet which the Duke sent to Puglia⁸⁸⁵ at the request of Pope Martin V., the capture of Cajeta, and the other memorable achievements of that fleet.

⁸⁸⁰ Braccio da Montone: Italian condottiere (1368-1424)

⁸⁸¹ Aquila or L'Aquila: capital city of the Abruzzo region

⁸⁸² Hannibal: Carthaginian general (248 – c. 182 BC)

⁸⁸³ Battle of Cannae: a major battle of the Second Punic War, August 2, 216 BC.

⁸⁸⁴ June 2, 1424

⁸⁸⁵ Puglia (Apulia): a region in southeastern Italy

[70] Illud quis non summe collaudet Aemiliam, quam modo Romandiolam dicimus, ex manibus tyrannorum vi captam, papae sine contradictione⁸⁸⁶ restitutam⁸⁸⁷ esse. Numquam hic Princeps summis pontificibus adversatus est, numquam ecclesiae defuit auxilio, numquam apostolica⁸⁸⁸ mandata contempsit, modernoque pontifici ut patri, ut domino, ut Christi vicario semper obtemperavit, primusque omnium principum praestitit oboedientiam. Si quid postea discidii⁸⁸⁹ fuit, hinc processit origo. Ipse tamen numquam papae famulatum negavit, quod illa in⁸⁹⁰ sede sedentem numquam contemnendum⁸⁹¹ censuit.

[71] Qualis vero erga concilium fuerit, vestrum neminem arbitror praeterire, nec me aliquis reprehendat, si hunc defensorem concilii nominaverim, quem non ignoratis⁸⁹² cum magno suorum sumptu semper hic praelatorum **frequentiam**⁸⁹³ tenuisse curasseque⁸⁹⁴, ne defectu suppositorum⁸⁹⁵ concilium⁸⁹⁶ deperiret. Cumque requirendi principes in adhaesionem essent, hujus praelati praesto fuere, qui suis sumptibus obirent⁸⁹⁷ munera legationum, quorum nullus aut labori pepercit aut sumptui.

⁸⁸⁶ contradictione A, B, R

⁸⁸⁷ omit. L, M

⁸⁸⁸ a papa V

⁸⁸⁹ dissidii L, M

⁸⁹⁰ illa in : in illa R

⁸⁹¹ contendendum Z

⁸⁹² ignoratur M

⁸⁹³ copiam O, V, Z

⁸⁹⁴ citasseque D, L, M

⁸⁹⁵ suorum V

⁸⁹⁶ frequentiam ... concilium omit. R

⁸⁹⁷ obierunt V

[70] [Secondly], who will not loudly applaud that Emilia, which we now call Romagnola⁸⁹⁸, was freed from the hands of the local tyrants⁸⁹⁹, who had conquered it by force, and willingly given back to the Pope.

Never did this Prince fight the Supreme Pontiffs, never did he refuse to help the Church, and never did he reject the apostolic commands. The present Pope he always obeyed as Pontiff, father, lord, and Vicar of Christ, and he was the first of the princes to declare his obedience to him. Even if later there was some disagreement between them, this is how their relationship actually began. The Duke never refused to serve the Pope since he considers that the person who occupies the Holy See should never be shown disrespect.

4.3.2. *The Duke's love of the Council*

[71] I believe that none of you can be unaware of the Duke's attitude towards the Council, and nobody will rebuke me if I call him Defender of the Council. For everybody knows that from the beginning he has required his prelates to attend the Council and has kept them here at great cost so that the Council would not collapse due to lack of participants.

And at the time when the Council solicited the support of the Princes, his prelates were ready to undertake, at their own cost, the necessary missions: none of them spared any effort or money.⁹⁰⁰

⁸⁹⁸ Romagnola: a region of Northern Italy comprising the two historic regions of Emilia and Romagna and forming an important part of the then papal state. The capital is Bologna

⁸⁹⁹ Not in the sense of cruel rulers, but in the sense of self-made, local rulers without the sanction of the Empire or the Church

⁹⁰⁰ Cf. Piccolomini's *De rebus Basiliae gestis commentarius*. Rejact, p. 332

[72] Atque ut sileam, quod⁹⁰¹ magna cum diligentia in hoc concilio et extra concilium ab episcopo Albiganensi est gestum, viro non solum genere, sed animi virtute nobilissimo, quid de aliis dicam? Hinc episcopus Novariensis ad regem Franciae destinatus; hinc Laudensis in Angliam missus. In remotissimamque⁹⁰² usque Poloniam Parmensis episcopus jussus est ire. Quo⁹⁰³ tempore ille vivebat, cujus modo insignia viduis depicta tapetibus cernitis ante oculos, moderni genitor regis, cui Deus adversus infidelium impetus omnes conatus secundos efficiat. Ad regem vero Aragonum Riccius abbas sancti Ambrosii in Siciliam usque perrexit. Nec tu, potentissime Princeps Burgundorum⁹⁰⁴, ab⁹⁰⁵ Longobardis praelatis fuisti praetermissus. Abbati namque de Cereto, patri integerrimo, ea legatio obvenit, quem tu propter patriam propterque dominum laeto vultu et gratissimo animo recepisti⁹⁰⁶, non ignarus quantum tibi dux ille Mediolanensis afficiatur, qui nihil magis exoptat quam tuae morem gerere voluntati. Apostolorum mihi illa tempora videbantur, cum orbis provincias inter se sortiti suam quisque legationem suscepit evangelium praedicaturus. Cujus rei non absimilem⁹⁰⁷ curam⁹⁰⁸ ducales praelati receperunt, quoniam tunc alii aberant.

⁹⁰¹ quid M

⁹⁰² remotissimam L, M

⁹⁰³ omit. V

⁹⁰⁴ Borgundorum A, D, V; Borgondorum O

⁹⁰⁵ a B

⁹⁰⁶ suscepisti Z

⁹⁰⁷ ad similiem V

⁹⁰⁸ curalem B, R

[72] How can I remain silent about the assiduous accomplishments both in and outside the Council of the Bishop of Albenga⁹⁰⁹, a man who is noble not only by descent, but also by virtue of soul. And what shall I say about the other prelates⁹¹⁰? The Bishop of Novara⁹¹¹ was sent to the King of France⁹¹², and the Bishop of Lodi⁹¹³ to England. The Bishop of Parma⁹¹⁴ was ordered to far-away Poland. At that time, the father⁹¹⁵ of the present King⁹¹⁶ was still alive. You see his coat of arms, painted by widows, on the tapestry right in front of you. May God help the present King to resist the attacks of the infidels. To the King of Aragon⁹¹⁷, who then resided in Sicily, was sent Abbot Ricci of Saint Ambrose⁹¹⁸. Nor were you, mighty Duke of Burgundy⁹¹⁹, neglected by the Lombard prelates. This mission fell to the Abbot of Cereto,⁹²⁰ that upright father, whom you received with happy countenance and joyous mind both because of his country and because of his lord. For you know how greatly you are esteemed by the Duke of Milan, who wants nothing more than to accommodate your wishes. That period seemed to me to resemble that of the apostles when they divided the provinces of the world between them, and each undertook a mission to preach the gospel there. A similar task was entrusted to the ducal prelates because, at the time, many other prelates had not yet arrived.⁹²¹

⁹⁰⁹ Matteo del Carretto

⁹¹⁰ They are all prelates from the territory of the Duke of Milan. Piccolomini here shows how the Duke – through his prelates - helped the Council to obtain the recognition of the European Princes

⁹¹¹ Bartolomeo Visconti: Bishop of Novara (b. 1402, bishop 1429, d. 1457). For some time Piccolomini's own employer

⁹¹² Charles VII

⁹¹³ Gerardo Landriani: Bishop of Lodi, made cardinal in 1439

⁹¹⁴ Delfino da Pergola: Bishop of Parma

⁹¹⁵ Vladislav II Jagello: King of Poland (b. c. 1362, k. 1386, d. 1434)

⁹¹⁶ Vladislav III Jagello: King of Poland (b. 1424, k. 1434, d. 1444)

⁹¹⁷ Alfonso V

⁹¹⁸ Antonio Ricci: Abbot of Sant'Ambrogio, Milan

⁹¹⁹ Philippe III le Bon: Duke of Burgundy (b. 1396, d. 1419, d. 1467)

⁹²⁰ The abbot of Chiaravalle

⁹²¹ Pius II: *Revised*, p. 332

[73] Repetite {11r} beneficia in vos⁹²² collata, obsecro. Considerate, si jamdiu hinc abissetis, nisi ipse favisset. Videte, si quid est umquam petitum, quod non sit impetratum. Videte, si hujus concilii bene gesta semper⁹²³ collaudarit⁹²⁴, observarique jusserit. Videte, si gentes armorum, si pedites, si equites, si pecuniam, si terras, si seipsum vobis obtulerit. Videte, si quid promiserit, quod non impleverit. Videte, si vos semper magna dilectione fuerit prosecutus. Hic cardinalibus ad concilium venientibus naves dedit; hic securum transitum omnibus praestitit; hic omnibus modis⁹²⁵ **nos**⁹²⁶ juvit⁹²⁷, qui non modo⁹²⁸ hoc, modo illud, ut plerique, sed semper idem dixit fecitque. Neque ut exprobrem ista dico, sed ut ejus erga vos fidem recognoscentes⁹²⁹ de ipso potius, quam de aliis⁹³⁰ confidatis, caveatisque ne quam ingratitude ostendatis, quam rem in divina mente almoque illo spiritu, qui praesidere in conciliis⁹³¹ creditur, nefas est nominare.

[74] Illudque evitate, ne de⁹³² vobis dici possit, quod dictum esse quondam Cicero narrat. Nam cum C. Laelio, bono et spectato viro, consulatum petenti *non esset*⁹³³ *mos gestus, magis populus a bono consule, quam a bono populo repulsus consul dicebatur.*

⁹²² nos V

⁹²³ omit. O

⁹²⁴ collaudaverit C

⁹²⁵ omit. O

⁹²⁶ vos V, Z

⁹²⁷ nos juvit : juvit vos O; ... [sic!] V

⁹²⁸ omit. N

⁹²⁹ cognoscentes C

⁹³⁰ alio L, M

⁹³¹ concilio L, M

⁹³² omit. L, M

⁹³³ omit. D, L, M

[73] I urge you to consider the benefits which the Duke has bestowed on you: how far would you have come if he had not favoured you? Have you ever asked for anything from him that you did not receive? Has he not always praised the excellent decisions of this Council and ordered them to be obeyed⁹³⁴? Has he not offered you armed men, foot soldiers, mounted soldiers, money, land, and even himself? Has he not always fulfilled his promises to you? Has he not always shown you great love? When the cardinals travelled to the Council, he gave them ships;⁹³⁵ he offered safe passage to them all, and he helped us in every way. Many will say now this and now that, but he always said and did the same thing. I do not say this in order to criticize you, but so that you may recognize his fidelity towards you, trust him more than others, and take care not to seem ungrateful. For, ingratitude is a sin towards the divine mind and the blessed Holy Spirit, who is believed to preside over the Council.

[74] Take care that it may not be said about you what was, according to Cicero, said about Gaius Laelius⁹³⁶, a good and respected man, who had sought the consulship: when against custom he had not been elected, it was said that it was more *the case of the people being rejected by a good consul, than of the consul being rejected by a good people.*⁹³⁷

⁹³⁴ i.e. in his own duchy

⁹³⁵ Piccolomini had actually sailed on one these ships, in the company of his then employer, Cardinal Capranica

⁹³⁶ Gaius Laelius Sapiens: Roman statesman (b. c. 188 BC)

⁹³⁷ Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 5, 19, 54. Quoted from the Loeb edition of 1927

[75] Pergo ad alia: **justitiaeque**⁹³⁸ erga subditos ministrandae aequitatisque⁹³⁹ servandae ducale studium vel in eo potestis comprehendere, quod ab omnibus subditis peraeque diligitur. Percurrite ejus territorium, omnes uno ore videbitis⁹⁴⁰ de suo principe bene dicere sibi bene optare, superosque rogare, ut superstes ac longaevus fiat. Nullum principi male dicere, nullum nisi magnifice amplissimeque de suo sentientes principe invenietis. Quam rem nemo ex justitia **natam**⁹⁴¹ negaverit. Eo pertinet, quod de **Sperone**⁹⁴² aliisque plerisque factum est, quos⁹⁴³, cum ipse in subditos graves, acerbos contumeliososque reperisset⁹⁴⁴, ab sese penitus abdicavit omni que magistratu dejecit. Ex quo fit, ut ejus dominatus altissimis defixus radicibus existat; est enim in amore ac caritate fundatus, non in timore, qui, ut dicit orator, *non est diuturnus magister officii*. Nec illud queo praeterire, quod nemo magis mortem hominis abhorret, nemo magis invitatus torqueri homines audit.

⁹³⁸ justitiae V, Z

⁹³⁹ aequitatisve M

⁹⁴⁰ audietis Z

⁹⁴¹ et equitate prodire V, Z

⁹⁴² de Sperone : Speroni V, Z [de Petra Sancta, *suprascr.* R]

⁹⁴³ quo N

⁹⁴⁴ respuisset V

4.3.3. *The Duke's justice towards his subjects*

[75] I now turn to the next item: the Duke's diligence in administering justice and fairness to his subjects. From this you will understand that he is loved by all his subjects and with good reason. Travel through his territory and you will see that all as with one mouth speak well of their Prince. They wish him the best, and they hope and pray to Heaven that he will survive them and live long. No one speaks badly of the Prince, and you will find that everybody thinks very highly of him. The reason for this is the Prince's sense of justice - nobody can deny that! Just think of what happened to Spero and many others: when the Duke found that they were heavy-handed, harsh and abusive to his subjects, he dismissed them and stripped them of all their offices. Therefore, his government has deep roots: it is based on love and affection and not on *fear, which – as the orator says – is not a lasting teacher of duty.*⁹⁴⁵ I add that no one abhors the death of a man more than him, and no one is more loath to hear people being tortured.

⁹⁴⁵ Cicero, *Philippicae*, 2, 36

[76] Sed de sua in hostes mansuetudine jam sermo desideratur, in qua re non erit absurdum, si ea de hoc principe dixerimus, quae de senatu populoque Romano⁹⁴⁶ Scipio dixit: *quem beneficio, quam metu obligare homines malle, exterarumque gentes fide ac societate junctas habere, quam tristi subjectas servitio asseverabat*. Qua laude hunc esse dignum ducem paucis colligemus exemplis. Victus adverso proelio Carolus⁹⁴⁷ Malatesta **captivus**⁹⁴⁸ duci deditur. Expectatis necem aut carceres? Nullo receptus supercilio fortunatus⁹⁴⁹ sibi⁹⁵⁰ fuisse vinci quam vicisse {11v} expertus est. Quid alios exercituum duces commemorem⁹⁵¹, qui in hujus deducti potestate tantam clementiam invenerunt, ut jam plerique didicerint tutius esse huic principi adversari quam favere.

⁹⁴⁶ populoque romano: romanoque populo A

⁹⁴⁷ Karolus A, D, O, V

⁹⁴⁸ capitaneus V, Z

⁹⁴⁹ fortunatus B, R

⁹⁵⁰ omit. N

⁹⁵¹ duces commemorem: commemorem duces B, R

4.3.4. The Duke's clemency towards his enemies

[76] We must now speak about his clemency towards enemies. It would be quite appropriate to say about this Prince what Scipio⁹⁵² said about the Roman senate and people: *They preferred to hold men by the bonds of kindness rather than by those of fear. They would rather have foreign nations united to them on terms of alliance and mutual good faith than kept down in hard and hopeless servitude.*⁹⁵³ We will show by a few examples how praiseworthy the Duke is in this respect:

Carlo Malatesta⁹⁵⁴ had been defeated in battle and was brought to the Duke as a prisoner. One would now expect death or prison, but no! Instead he was received with no severity at all: he was more fortunate in having been defeated than he would have been if he had been victorious. And I could mention other army commanders who came into his power and were treated so mercifully that they might actually conclude that it was better to be against this Prince than to be for him!

⁹⁵² Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus: Roman statesman and general (235–183 BC), also known as Scipio Africanus and Scipio the Elder. Fought in the Second Punic War

⁹⁵³ Livius, *Ab urbe condita*, 26, 49

⁹⁵⁴ Carlo Malatesta: Italian condottiere and Lord of Rimini (1368-1429)

[77] Sunt enim quidam homines⁹⁵⁵, qui velut equi, quanto magis illis indulgetur, tanto majori petulantia sunt. Franciscus Carminiola⁹⁵⁶ sub hoc principe militavit, divitiisque honoreque auctus ad hostes confugit, magnaue clade veterem saepe dominum affecit. Hujus apud hostes defuncti filias suscepit egregioque⁹⁵⁷ matrimonio copulavit, uxori Carminiolae⁹⁵⁸ **bona omnia**⁹⁵⁹ restituit. Qualem vero serenissimis **se**⁹⁶⁰ Aragoniae Navarraeque **regibus**⁹⁶¹ exhibuerit, nulla⁹⁶² terrarum portio non audivit: hoc omnem exsuperat⁹⁶³ magnificentiam. En dux ipse cum alibi alios hic se ipsum⁹⁶⁴ magnificentia superavit. O genus egregium! O proles verissima Galeazi⁹⁶⁵. Est ne hominum ulla conditio, quae non te diligat? Est ne gens ulla tam barbara, tam effera, tam ab omni humanitate alienata, quae tuo nomini non afficiatur? Hic est quem colere omnes debent, cum *propter virtutem et probitatem*, sicut Cicero credit, *etiam eos quos numquam vidimus, diligamus*; quem hostes, sicut ego puto, talia **in dies**⁹⁶⁶ audientes non possunt non laudare.

⁹⁵⁵ quidam homines : homines quidam O

⁹⁵⁶ Carmagnola O

⁹⁵⁷ egregio B, R

⁹⁵⁸ Carmagnolae O

⁹⁵⁹ bona omnia : omnia bona O, V

⁹⁶⁰ omit. B, C, R, V, Z

⁹⁶¹ sese add. V, Z

⁹⁶² nonnulla Z (sic!)

⁹⁶³ exuperat B, C, D, L, R, Z

⁹⁶⁴ magnificentiam ... ipsum omit. R

⁹⁶⁵ Galeatii M

⁹⁶⁶ in dies : diutius O, V, Z

[77] There are men who like horses grow more snappish the more they are indulged. Francesco Carmagnola⁹⁶⁷ fought under this Prince, who loaded him with riches and honours. He then fled to the enemies of the Duke⁹⁶⁸ and several times inflicted severe defeats on his former master. When Carmagnola died in enemy country⁹⁶⁹, the Duke received his daughters, arranged excellent marriages for them, and restored all his property to the widow. Also, the whole world knows how he behaved towards the Most Serene Kings of Aragon⁹⁷⁰ and Navarra⁹⁷¹: beyond all conceivable generosity! Indeed, the Duke may on other occasions have surpassed everybody else in generosity, but here he surpassed himself. Oh, eminent lineage! Oh, true child of Galeazzo⁹⁷²! Is there any sort of man who does not love you? Is there any people so barbarous, so obtuse, so alienated from all humanity that they do not cherish your name? Cicero believes that *On account of their virtue and uprightness we feel a sort of affection even for those whom we have never seen.*⁹⁷³ So, here is one whom all should revere, and I believe that even his enemies must praise him as they daily hear such things about him.

⁹⁶⁷ Francesco Bussone also called count of Carmagnola: Italian condottiere (c. 1382 – 1432)

⁹⁶⁸ i.e. the Venetians

⁹⁶⁹ Executed by his masters, the Venetians, in 1432

⁹⁷⁰ Alfonso V

⁹⁷¹ Alfonso's brother, Juan II, King of Navarre and Aragon (b. 1398, k. Navarre 1425, k. Aragon 1458, d. 1479)

⁹⁷² Giangaleazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan

⁹⁷³ Cicero: *Laelius de amicitia*, 8, 28. Quoted after the Loeb edition of 1964

[78] Hunc ergo quis neget erga omnes esse benignum, cum benignissimum semper in hostes reperierimus⁹⁷⁴? Quis umquam ad eum venit non benigne **magnificeque**⁹⁷⁵ receptus? Incredibile vobis videretur, si pecuniarum illam explicarem summam, qua quotannis⁹⁷⁶ transeuntes dominos et ad se venientes honorat oratores. Cujus rei⁹⁷⁷, si Papiam elegeritis, experimentum principum oratores praelatique videbunt, quorum nemo indonatus abibit. Esset mihi magna copia memorandi plurimos, qui domo extorres patriaque pulsi ducali pecunia vitam agunt.

⁹⁷⁴ reperimus B, R; repererimus C, D, L, M, N

⁹⁷⁵ magnificentissimeque V, Z

⁹⁷⁶ tot annis O

⁹⁷⁷ omit. N

4.3.5. *The Duke's benevolence towards all*

[78] Who will deny that this Duke is benevolent towards everybody when we see that he has always been extremely benevolent towards his enemies? Who has ever come to him and not been received pleasantly and generously? You would not believe me if I told you how large amounts he spends in honouring the lords who every year pass through his realm, and the ambassadors who come to him. If you choose Pavia, the ambassadors and prelates of the Princes shall have the same experience: no one will depart without a gift.⁹⁷⁸ I also ought to mention the many expatriates and people in exile who are presently living on stipends from the Duke.

⁹⁷⁸ Here Piccolomini is somewhat indelicate, cf. his own remarks in section 28

[79] Sed jam finem nostra poscit⁹⁷⁹ oratio. Quod⁹⁸⁰ ea quae ab initio⁹⁸¹ sumus polliciti non probasse solum, sed ostendisse planius opinamur. Quare cum hujus principis devotionem erga vos et ecclesiam non minimam neque vulgarem dinoscatis⁹⁸², cum pium, cum justum, cum clementem, cum magnificentissimum ducem **videatis**⁹⁸³, quid est quod ejus vobis suspectam fidem efficiat⁹⁸⁴? Quis timor, quae dubitatio, quae suspicio de isto⁹⁸⁵ potest concipi duce⁹⁸⁶? Nihil profecto est quod Papiam repudietis. Hic quae ad Graecos **opus**⁹⁸⁷ sunt habetis; hic papa cum concilio potest convenire; hic domos egregias; hic victualium invenietis copiam; hic securitas, hic libertas ostenditur; hic principem amicum⁹⁸⁸ nacti estis, cujus **vetus**⁹⁸⁹ et probata est amicitia, quem si novis postponatis amicis a Ciceronis consilio⁹⁹⁰ recedatis, cujus haec de amicitia verba leguntur: **{12r}** *Existit autem hoc loco quaedam quaestio subdifficilis, numquid amici novi digni⁹⁹¹ amicitia veteribus amicis sint anteponendi.* Homine indigna dubitatio.

⁹⁷⁹ possit R

⁹⁸⁰ Quare M

⁹⁸¹ principio V

⁹⁸² dignoscatis V

⁹⁸³ cognoscatis V, Z

⁹⁸⁴ faciat L, M; efficiatur V

⁹⁸⁵ ipso L, M

⁹⁸⁶ principe V

⁹⁸⁷ necessaria V, Z

⁹⁸⁸ omit. L, M

⁹⁸⁹ vera V, Z

⁹⁹⁰ concilio Z

⁹⁹¹ digna Z

5. Conclusion

5.1. Pavia is the best choice in all respects

[79] But now our oration is approaching its end. I conclude that we have not only shown, but indeed proven what we promised to begin with. You must acknowledge that the devotion of this Prince towards you and the Church is neither small nor commonplace, and that he is a pious, just, clement and generous Duke. Then, how could you doubt his trustworthiness? Why should you fear, doubt, and distrust this Duke? There is simply no reason to reject Pavia. Here you have everything needed in relation to the Greeks. Here the Pope can meet with the Council. Here you will find stately houses and ample provisions. Here security and independence are manifest. Here you have gained a Prince as a friend, one whose friendship is old and proven. If you prefer other, new friends to him, then you will disregard the advice of Cicero, who has written this about friendship: *But at this point there arises a certain question of some little difficulty: are new friends who are worthy of friendship at any time to be preferred to old ones...*⁹⁹² This doubt is unworthy of a man!

⁹⁹² Cicero: *Laelius de amicitia*, 19, 67

[80] Non enim debent⁹⁹³ esse amicitiarum, sicut aliarum rerum satietates⁹⁹⁴, veterrima quaeque⁹⁹⁵, ut ea vina, quae vetustatem ferunt, esse debent suavissima. Verum illud est quod dicitur: *modios multos salis simul edendos esse, ut amicitiae munus expletum sit*. Pythagoras⁹⁹⁶ vero **haud**⁹⁹⁷ *injiciendam unicuique dexteram* dicebat, *id est non prompte aut inconsulto conciliari oportere*, sicut Plutarchus interpretatur. Idem quoque ait, *quae nigrantes habent caudas, gustari non oportere*: quae ideo dicta sunt, ut in rebus agendis illorum conditiones⁹⁹⁸ diligenter investigemus, cum quibus contrahimus.

⁹⁹³ debet L, M, V

⁹⁹⁴ satietas D, L, V; societas M, O

⁹⁹⁵ quoque V

⁹⁹⁶ Pictagoras N, V, Z

⁹⁹⁷ aut V, Z

⁹⁹⁸ condictiones O

5.2. Appeal to friendship and caution

[80] For though you may grow tired of other things, you should not grow tired of friendship. Old friendships should be the sweetest ones - like old wines. But it is also true, as they say, that: *Men must eat many a peck⁹⁹⁹ of salt together before the claims of friendship are fulfilled.*¹⁰⁰⁰ And Pythagoras¹⁰⁰¹ said that *one should not shake hands with everybody*, which Plutarch¹⁰⁰² interprets in the sense that *one should not make alliances rashly or unthinkingly.*¹⁰⁰³ He also says that *you should not eat things with black tails.*¹⁰⁰⁴ By this he means that in all our affairs we should carefully consider the circumstances of the people with whom we are dealing.

⁹⁹⁹ Modius: Roman measure of grain, the equivalent of 10,5 lit.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Cf. Aristotle, *Eth. Eudem.*, 7, 2; *Eth. Nic.*, 8, 3, 8. Quoted by Cicero, *Laelius de amicitia*, 19, 67. Quoted after the Loeb edition of 1964

¹⁰⁰¹ Pythagoras: Greek philosopher (ca. 570 - ca. 495 BC)

¹⁰⁰² Plutarchos: Greek historian (ca. 46 – 120)

¹⁰⁰³ Verbatim quote from Guarino Veronese's translation from Greek into Latin of Plutarch's *De Liberis educandis*, p. 7

¹⁰⁰⁴ Verbatim quote from Guarino Veronese's translation from Greek into Latin of Plutarch's *De Liberis educandis*, p. 7

[81] Hoc etiam facit, ut intentiones eorum considerare debeatis, qui concilium petunt. In qua re de aliis vos judicetis, ego de duce dicam: quem¹⁰⁰⁵ tres causae potissimum movent, ut requisitus satisfaciat, ut in re fidei praesto sit, ut ab omni vos periculo subtrahat¹⁰⁰⁶. Versatus namque in rebus arduis Princeps multorum dominorum diversarumque communitatum¹⁰⁰⁷ per exploratores¹⁰⁰⁸ secreta cognoscit, timetque ne locum eligatis, qui vobis perditioni fiet. Cupit ab omni vos fraude omnique periculo eripere. In qua re, patres optimi, sic precor excubetis, ut nihil improvisum accidere possit, nihil inopinatum, nihil omnino novum. Atque ita acerrimam in omnes **partes**¹⁰⁰⁹ aciem intendatis, ne qua fraude capiamini.

¹⁰⁰⁵ quae M

¹⁰⁰⁶ subtrahit V

¹⁰⁰⁷ diversarumque communitatum : diversorum comitatum V

¹⁰⁰⁸ sploratores A, B, C, D [*with correction mark*], N, O, R; spoliatores Z (sic!); sproratores [sic!] V

¹⁰⁰⁹ mentis *add.* V, Z

[81] Therefore, we should examine the intentions of those parties who are seeking to host the Council.¹⁰¹⁰ You yourselves will assess the other parties, but I shall speak about the Duke who is most concerned with three things: to meet your requirements; to be zealous in the matter of the Faith; and to do away with all risk to you. For the Prince, being placed in a highly risky situation, endeavours to know through spies the secrets of many lords and various city states¹⁰¹¹, and he fears that you will choose a location which will be your ruin.¹⁰¹² The Duke wants to rid you of all danger. In this matter, excellent Fathers, I implore you to be vigilant and not to allow anything unforeseen, surprising, or wholly new to take place. Keep careful watch in all directions so that you may not be deceived.

¹⁰¹⁰ E.g. Avignon (France), Savoy, Venice, Florence, Perugia, cf. section 1 above

¹⁰¹¹ The development of the spying, i.e. intelligence gathering systems of Renaissance rulers was evidently not secret nor shameful, but on the contrary the mark of a prudent Prince

¹⁰¹² Piccolomini hints that the Duke may have acquired knowledge about the motives of other interested parties, e.g. the King of France, who may not be acting in the best interests of the Council

[82] Hic, te precor, humanissime pater cardinalis sanctae Sabinae , intendas, ne quam pluribus annis summo labore summaque vigilantia¹⁰¹³ famam perquisivisti, unus dies eripiat¹⁰¹⁴. Quamquam quidquid eveniat Bohemicae¹⁰¹⁵ reductionis te laus assequatur. Sed maiorem tibi Graecia laudem attulerit, si locum periculosum effugiens in eo consenties, in eoque alios animabis, ubi sine periculo maturari negotium possit.

[83] Nec te inoratum, integerrime pater, relinquam, cardinalis sancti Petri, qui non tuo solum hic¹⁰¹⁶ nomine, sed papali¹⁰¹⁷ regioque¹⁰¹⁸ praesides: aspice quod¹⁰¹⁹ te dignum est, quod summo pontifici conveniat, quod regi illi potentissimo victoriosissimoque consentaneum **existimas**¹⁰²⁰. Neque te hic neque tuum regem **passio ducit**¹⁰²¹: ille pro fide in patria pugnat, de cuius laudibus bellicisque triumphis non nihil explicuissem, nisi oratores ejus, viros literatissimos atque ornatissimos patres, Conchensem¹⁰²² Burgensemque praesulem ante oculos cernerem, qui et ornatius et melius rem valeant absolvere. Tu hic rei fidei curam adhibes: nunc opus, nunc labor est, nunc tua industria viderit, ne loco inepto consentiamus.

¹⁰¹³ summaque vigilantia: *omit.* B, R

¹⁰¹⁴ arripiat V

¹⁰¹⁵ Bohemiae N

¹⁰¹⁶ tuo solum hic: solum tuo hic D, L, M; tuo hic solum V

¹⁰¹⁷ populi M

¹⁰¹⁸ hic *add.* L, M

¹⁰¹⁹ de *add.* L, M

¹⁰²⁰ estimas O, Z

¹⁰²¹ passio ducit : sinistra ducit affectio V, Z [V has affecti instead of affectio]

¹⁰²² Concensem A, B, C, D, R, V

5.3. Appeals to the cardinals and prelates

[82] Now, I beseech you, benevolent Father and Cardinal of Santa Sabina¹⁰²³: take care not to lose in one day the reputation which you have built over many years with considerable effort and diligence. Whatever happens, you will always be praised for bringing back¹⁰²⁴ the Hussites¹⁰²⁵. But Greece will bring you even greater honour if you avoid a perilous location and consent - and make others consent - to a location where the whole undertaKing may be concluded in safety.

[83] I also appeal to you, honourable Father, Cardinal of San Pietro¹⁰²⁶ who presides¹⁰²⁷ here not only in your own name, but also in the name of the Pope, and in the name of your King¹⁰²⁸. Consider what is worthy of you yourself, convenient for the Supreme Pontiff, and agreeable to your mighty and victorious King. Neither you nor your King is moved by passions. He is battling for the Faith¹⁰²⁹ in his own country, and I would have said something about his merits and military triumphs if his own ambassadors, the learned and excellent Bishops of Cuenca¹⁰³⁰ and Burgos¹⁰³¹, had not been present. For they would certainly be able to speak better and more brilliantly on this matter than me. So consider this matter of the Faith carefully and make every effort to prevent us from agreeing to an unsuitable place.

¹⁰²³ Giuliano Cesarini: cardinal, papal legate, president of the Council (b. 1398, c. 1426, d.1444). Little did Piccolomini know that one day he would himself become Cardinal of Santa Sabina

¹⁰²⁴ "reductio": i.e. bringing back the Hussites to the fold of the Roman Catholic Church

¹⁰²⁵ The Hussites were reconciled with the Church at the Council of Basel through the agency of Cardinal Cesarini. The agreement between the Hussites and the Council was called the Hussite Compacts. Later in his career, Piccolomini, who had direct knowledge of the Hussites from a visit to Bohemia, defended extending the agreement, but as a Pope he definitively abrogated it

¹⁰²⁶ Juan Cervantes: cardinal (d. 1453). On March 27, 1436, Cardinal Cervantes returned to Basel with powers from the Pope to solve the difficulties between Basel and the Council of Florence; he remained in Basel for almost a year as the only representative of the Pope; in 1436, Piccolomini became his private secretary, and later they became colleagues and friends

¹⁰²⁷ It is uncertain what Piccolomini means by "preside" (praesides) in this context. Cardinal Cervantes was in Basel as the Pope's representative, but seemingly also at the same time representing the King of Castile

¹⁰²⁸ Juan II of Castille: King of Castille (b. 1405, k. 1406, d. 1454)

¹⁰²⁹ I.e. against the Moorish Kingdoms in the South of Spain

¹⁰³⁰ Alvaro de Isorno: Bishop of Cuenca

¹⁰³¹ Alfonso García de Santa Maria: Archbishop of Burgos (b. 1384, b. 1435, d. 1456)

[84] At te, praestantissime pater cardinalis Arelatensis, tanto minus oravero, quanto {12v} magis ad rem ipsam te video animatum. Quod si umquam invigilasti, si semper constans firmusque fuisti, si semper concilii profectum desiderasti, hic aures, hic mentem¹⁰³² arrige: nunc tua probitas, nunc tua diligentia pateat. Idcirco namque cardinales vocamini, quod¹⁰³³ quasi cardines ecclesiam sustinetis¹⁰³⁴.

[85] Sic vos alios praelatos oro atque obsecro¹⁰³⁵. Sic vos omnes precor ecclesiasticos: aspice quae fidei, quae iustitiae sunt, abjice¹⁰³⁶ passiones, regem illum christianissimum imitemini, qui nulla victus¹⁰³⁷ cupiditate ibi locum eligi rogat, ubi geri negotium melius **existimetis**¹⁰³⁸, ubi quae fidei et quae concordiae sunt valeant terminari. Quae secundum alios alibi, secundum me tutius in Papia conficiantur. Nec enim video, **quo**¹⁰³⁹ commodius, aut liberius esse possitis. Itur namque ad principem benignum et vestri coetus amantissimum, qui fraudes, non modo non¹⁰⁴⁰ instruit¹⁰⁴¹, sed prorsus ignorat, cujus animus nihil nisi altum ac magnificum cogitat. Consultius est principi se nobili et nihil praeter honorem cupienti committere quam vulgo, quod est plerumque ingenio¹⁰⁴² mobili¹⁰⁴³, seditiosum atque discordiosum¹⁰⁴⁴, cupidum novarum rerum, quieti et¹⁰⁴⁵ otio adversum, de quo Virgilius: *Scinditur incertum studia in contraria vulgus*.

¹⁰³² mente N

¹⁰³³ quia M

¹⁰³⁴ sustinetis A, B, C, R

¹⁰³⁵ atque obsecro: atque obtestor L; ac obtestor M

¹⁰³⁶ abicite A, B, C, D, N, O, R; sunt abjicite : abjicite sunt V

¹⁰³⁷ vobis O

¹⁰³⁸ estimetis O, Z; extimetis V

¹⁰³⁹ in loco *add.* V, Z

¹⁰⁴⁰ *omit.* A, B, C, N, R [non *add. suprascr.* D]

¹⁰⁴¹ instituit V

¹⁰⁴² inge... [sic!] V

¹⁰⁴³ nobili R

¹⁰⁴⁴ atque discordiosum: *omit.* B, R

¹⁰⁴⁵ *omit.* N

[84] And you, eminent Father, Cardinal of Arles¹⁰⁴⁶: I need not appeal to you as I see how deeply you are engaged in this whole matter¹⁰⁴⁷. Be vigilant, constant, and firm, as you have always been, now is the time for you to listen attentively; now you must show your integrity and diligence! For the reason you Cardinals are called Cardinals is that you are the ‘Cardines’ (hinges) of the Church.

[85] In the same way, I implore and beseech all you other prelates and clergymen¹⁰⁴⁸: focus on Faith and justice, throw off passions, and imitate the Most Christian King¹⁰⁴⁹. For this King is not a victim to self-interest, but he wants us to choose the location where you think the Council can best be held¹⁰⁵⁰ and where the matter of Faith and concord can be successfully concluded. Others may think differently, but I believe that Pavia is the safest place for this. I really do not see where you could stay in greater comfort and independence, for you would be going to a benevolent Prince, who fully supports your cause. He does not order others to engage in any deceit, and he himself is entirely without such.¹⁰⁵¹ He will only contemplate that which is noble and generous. It is safer to entrust yourselves to a noble Prince who desires only what is honourable than to the common people which is mostly unstable, seditious, quarrelsome, eager for political change, and opposed to peace and quiet¹⁰⁵². As Virgil¹⁰⁵³ says: *The wavering crowd is torn into opposing factions.*¹⁰⁵⁴

¹⁰⁴⁶ Louis Alleman: cardinal (b. ca. 1390, c. 1426, d. 1450). Leader of the French party at the Council and virulently antipapal

¹⁰⁴⁷ And appealing directly to the French cardinal in favour of Pavia would not only be futile, but also insolent as the cardinal would certainly want to move the Council to France. Piccolomini would later become his friend

¹⁰⁴⁸ Piccolomini seemingly does not appeal to the numerous, non-clerical element of the Council to which he himself belonged, though he was later quite critical of the practice of incorporating uneducated laymen, e.g. members of prelates’ retinues, into the Council (for the purpose of bolstering the number of delegates in general and of followers of the individual prelates in particular)

¹⁰⁴⁹ Charles VII, King of France

¹⁰⁵⁰ At the risk of further provoking the French party and the cardinal of Arles, Piccolomini persists in the hypocritical fiction that the French King is truly neutral and does not desire the Council to go to a French city

¹⁰⁵¹ Here Piccolomini stretches the credulity of the assembly quite unreasonably: the Duke of Milan was well-known as a scheming, deceitful Prince

¹⁰⁵² Again Piccolomini expresses his contempt of democracy and the common people

¹⁰⁵³ Publius Vergilius Maro (also known by the Anglicised forms of his name as Virgil or Vergil): Roman poet (70 – 19 BC)

¹⁰⁵⁴ Virgil, *Aeneid*, 2, 39. Quoted from the Loeb edition of 1999

[86] Et cuius vobis fides, quam ipsius principis potest esse securior? Noti sunt vobis mores ejus, neque¹⁰⁵⁵ concipere metum potestis aliquem. Non hic vindictae exactor, non contumeliae illator, non injuriae prosecutor, cuius rei nemo magis didicit oblivisci, qui cum saepe ulcisci potuerit, vindictam tamen semper abhorruit. Hic animum vincere, iram cohibere, victoriam temperare, adversariosque nobilitate, ingenio et virtute praestantes non modo extollere jacentes, sed etiam amplificare eorum pristinam dignitatem exemplo Caesaris consuevit. Huc ergo ite, huc animos intendite¹⁰⁵⁶. Securitatem utilitatemque vestram agnoscite¹⁰⁵⁷, discrimina non rerum solum, sed personarum etiam¹⁰⁵⁸ evadite: Accedite¹⁰⁵⁹ hunc¹⁰⁶⁰ qui semper vobis benefecit; ostendite gratitudinem et memoriam beneficiorum.

[87] Sicubi tamen utilius aut melius esse potestis, vestri iudicii sit: nihil erit duci molestum, si bene succedere intellexerit, eumque quocumque pergitis oboedientem habebitis. Vestrum tamen est¹⁰⁶¹ cavere, ne periculosum eligentes locum, et jurisjurandi neglectores suscepti videamini, et, qua nunc apud omnes estis, clarissimam famam amittatis, quo bono nihil est humano generi **aut acceptabilius a superis**¹⁰⁶² aut praestantius concessum, cuius contemptores haud scio utrum numero sint habendi aliquo, siquidem famae contemptor suae ab eo prodigus appellatur, quem non Apollinis oraculum, sed sacrae litterae judicant sapientem. Finis¹⁰⁶³

¹⁰⁵⁵ nec N

¹⁰⁵⁶ et add. V

¹⁰⁵⁷ cognoscite L, M

¹⁰⁵⁸ omit. O

¹⁰⁵⁹ ad add. C

¹⁰⁶⁰ huc M

¹⁰⁶¹ tamen est : est tamen O

¹⁰⁶² aut acceptabilius a superis : a superis acceptabilis V, Z

¹⁰⁶³ omit. B, D, M, R

5.4. Final exhortation

[86] And whom can you trust more than this Prince? You know his character, and you cannot possibly fear it. He does not like to pursue vendettas, to raise quarrels, or to repay insults. All such he has learnt, more than any other, to ignore. He could often have sought revenge, but he has always abhorred it. He has perfect self-control, curbs his anger, and is temperate in victory. And when noble, brilliant, and courageous adversaries were lying prostrate and beaten, he - following the example of Caesar - not only lifted them up again, nay he even raised them above their former position. Therefore, think of Pavia; go there! Recognize where your security and advantage lie. Avoid the risks not only to your possessions, but also to your own persons. Go to him who always favoured you. Show your gratitude and remember his favours to you.

[87] However, it is only you yourselves who can make the best and most advantageous choice. The Duke will accept anything if only he can see that you are successful; wherever you want to go, he will comply. So, it is up to you not to choose an unsafe location, not to seem to fail your oath, and not to lose that excellent reputation which you now enjoy everywhere. For from Heaven mankind receives nothing more agreeable and admirable than an excellent reputation¹⁰⁶⁴. I honestly think there must very few, if any, who despise such a reputation! But should there be someone, who spurns his own reputation, then he will surely be called a profligate by the One who is called wise – not by the oracle of Apollo¹⁰⁶⁵, but by the Sacred Scriptures themselves¹⁰⁶⁶.

¹⁰⁶⁴ The theme of glory and fame was as dear to the humanists as it was to antiquity, cf. the introduction to Piccolomini's "autobiography", i.e. his famous *Commentarii*

¹⁰⁶⁵ Apollo: major God in Roman mythology

¹⁰⁶⁶ I.e. God. It is remarkable how Piccolomini manages, in front of the Council fathers, to mention a Roman God from Antiquity in the same breath as the Christian God and still to put distance between them. Is he reassuring the Council fathers of his orthodoxy – after having regaled them with references to antiquity all along his oration - or is he subtly challenging them?

Appendix A: Introduction to the speech as given in mss. Z and V¹⁰⁶⁷

Oratio super electione loci pro futuro concilio ad reducendos Graecos habita Basileae in congregatione generali per¹⁰⁶⁸ dominum Eneam Silvium Senensem xv kal. Novembris MCCCCXXXVI.

[88] {137v} Magnae saepe res atque arduae, patres reverendissimi, in hoc sacro concilio versatae terminataeque sunt, nulla tamen umquam vel major vel periculosior ea fuit, de qua nunc consultatio vertitur. Non enim agitur modo de supplicationibus aut de principibus¹⁰⁶⁹ invicem conciliandis aut de coercenda¹⁰⁷⁰ nonnullorum contumacia¹⁰⁷¹ clericorum, sed de augmento fidei, de reductione Graecorum, de infinitarum paene animarum recuperatione, quarum consummatio¹⁰⁷² rerum magnum fructum, magnam gloriam sit allatura, omissio vero non solum nos, sed totam Latinam ecclesiam obscura fama denigret. Et cum hujus rei causa¹⁰⁷³ transferendum esse concilium affirmetis, sicuti mea fert opinio, pars non minima totius erit absoluta negotii, si tutum locum et rebus aptum conficiendis amplectemini¹⁰⁷⁴.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Text as in Z, with variants from V. Pagination on the basis of Z

¹⁰⁶⁸ elegantem et ornatum virum *add.* V

¹⁰⁶⁹ principatibus V

¹⁰⁷⁰ coercenda V, Z

¹⁰⁷¹ contumelia V

¹⁰⁷² consumatio V, Z

¹⁰⁷³ *omit.* V

¹⁰⁷⁴ amplectemur V

**Oration on the choice of venue for the future Council of reunion with the Greeks,
held in Basel, in a general congregation, by Enea Silvio of Siena, on October 18,
1336**

[88] Often have great and difficult matters, Reverend Fathers, been treated and concluded in this Holy Council, but until now none has been greater and more perilous than the one to be discussed today. For it does not concern petitions, nor the reconciliation of Princes, nor curbing the defiance of some clerics, but it is about the advancement of the Faith, about reunion with the Greeks, and about the recovery of an almost infinite number of souls. Success in these matters will bring great results and great glory, whereas failure will give not only us, but also the whole Latin Church a black reputation. And as you declare that the cause of this is the issue of the relocation of the Council, I think that the decisive factor in the solution of this matter will be that you accept a place that is safe and advantageous for the conduct of your affairs.

[89] Quapropter nihil modo magis vellem quam animos omnium in consulendo liberos fore, neque delicto neque libidini obnoxios, ut sine cunctatione locum eligeretis, qui nobis usui securitatis foret, sicque ordinaretis, ut orientali ecclesiae conventiones sine periculo occidentalis servare liceret. In qua re dum saepius ipse considero, dumque rei magnitudinem mecum ipse reputo¹⁰⁷⁵, ex usu fore considero, si quod multi de re hac¹⁰⁷⁶ sermonem haberent locorumque vobis¹⁰⁷⁷ nominatorum condiciones planius aperirent, quibus ex rebus nihil absurdum putavi, si me quoque quamvis indignum ex vestra¹⁰⁷⁸ contione loquentem audiretis, de nullo alio quam de Papiensi loco verba facientem nullumque omnino injuria lacerantem, nusquam enim, ut puto, fines modestiae¹⁰⁷⁹ sum egressurus¹⁰⁸⁰, quamquam veritatis inveniendae causa licitum mihi videatur nonnullis posse contradicere, qui ante dixissent¹⁰⁸¹. Haec est enim, ut scitis dicere Ciceronem, vetus et Socratica ratio, contra alterius opinionem disserendi. Nam ita facillime quod verisimillimum esset inveniri posse, Socrates arbitrabatur. Sed vobis magis oboediendum existimavi quam Socrati.

¹⁰⁷⁵ repeto V

¹⁰⁷⁶ omit. V

¹⁰⁷⁷ nobis V

¹⁰⁷⁸ nostra V

¹⁰⁷⁹ molestiae V

¹⁰⁸⁰ aggressurus V

¹⁰⁸¹ omit. V

[89] Therefore, I desire nothing more than that, in this deliberation, all minds should be free and not influenced by sin or passion, so that you may without hesitation choose a location that will be advantageous and safe for you, and that you may ordain matters so that it is possible to make agreements with the Oriental Church without detriment to the Occidental Church. I often think on this matter and ponder its importance, and I consider it to be useful that many should speak and describe more clearly the condition of the venues proposed to you. Therefore I find it reasonable that you should also hear me, though unworthy, speak in your assembly: I shall be talking only about the location of Pavia, without insulting anybody else and without transgressing the boundaries of propriety – though, for the sake of finding the truth, I consider it legitimate to contradict some of those who have spoken before. For as you know, Cicero states that it is an time-honoured and Socratic method to speak against the opinion of somebody else.¹⁰⁸² Socrates thought that in this way it is easy to find what is most likely to be true. But, of course, I owe greater obedience to you than to Socrates.

¹⁰⁸² Cf. Cicero: *Disputationes Tusculanae*, 1, 4, 8

[90] Et licet pater clarissimus, episcopus Albiganensis, vir non solum genere sed animi virtute nobilissimus, qui de rebus arduis se locuturum quamvis gravi confectum valetudine¹⁰⁸³ ipse pedibus suis venire non posset, portari se fecit, praestantissimo illi Romano Appio Claudio¹⁰⁸⁴ similem, licet etiam vir consultissimus, dominus Christophorus de Velate¹⁰⁸⁵, ducales oratores, licet etiam Isidorus, orator vester diligentissimus, et veri audactissimus explicator, multa de illo Papiensi loco multaque de illo victoriosissimo Mediolanensium duce non minus vere quam eleganter explicaverunt¹⁰⁸⁶, tot tamen illius loci commoditates sunt, tot principis erga vos beneficia, ut nihil mirandum sit, si mihi quoque post se dicendi locum reliquerunt. Namque etsi qui post me velint dicere, patentem eis campum materiamque relinquo.

¹⁰⁸³ valetudine V

¹⁰⁸⁴ Claudio V

¹⁰⁸⁵ Vellate V, Z

¹⁰⁸⁶ explicaverit V

[90] Until now, three men have said much, both truthfully and elegantly, about the venue of Pavia and about the victorious Duke of Milan. They were the ducal ambassadors, one being the illustrious Father, the Bishop of Albenga, a man noble not only in family, but also in virtue of the mind (who, having to speak about grave matters and for health reasons not being able to walk, had himself carried to this place, like the eminent Roman, Appius Claudius), and the other being Lord Christophoro de Velate, a very able man. The third one was Isidoro, your very diligent orator and forthright proponent of truth. Still I think that so many are the advantages of that place and so many the favours shown to you by that Prince, that it is not strange at all if those speakers left something for me to say, too. And if others want to speak after me, I also leave them an open field and matter for discourse.

[91] Vos tamen, patres optimi, ne me, oro, contemnite, si privatus {137v} abjectusque homuncio fuerim¹⁰⁸⁷. Expedit enim in rebus arduis non auctorem¹⁰⁸⁸ spectare, sed rationem, neque ita facere decet¹⁰⁸⁹, quemadmodum de Pythagoricis¹⁰⁹⁰ accepimus, quos ferunt siquid affirmarent in disputando, cum ex his quaereretur, quare ita esset, respondere solitos “Ipse dixit” – ipse autem erat Pythagoras¹⁰⁹¹ - me namque si non auctoritas, at saltem ratio facit audiendum, nihil enim me dicturum censeo, quod non ex ratione consistat, quare, si placet, si ne¹⁰⁹² consonum est ea audire, quae commoda vestra concernunt, sinite ut ea, quae cogitavi, proferantur¹⁰⁹³ in medium¹⁰⁹⁴ unicuique deliberandi praebeant¹⁰⁹⁵ facultatem, quae omnia iudicio vestro relinquo et vestro mando examini, ut siquid boni verique afferro, amplectamini, siquid mali falsique est, id totum respuatis.

¹⁰⁸⁷ fuero V

¹⁰⁸⁸ auctoritatem V

¹⁰⁸⁹ dicet V

¹⁰⁹⁰ Pictagoris Z; Pictagoricis V

¹⁰⁹¹ Pictagoras V, Z

¹⁰⁹² si ne : sive V

¹⁰⁹³ cogitavi proferantur : scripsi legantur V

¹⁰⁹⁴ ut melius *add.* V

¹⁰⁹⁵ praebeat V

[91] But you, good Fathers, should not despise me, even though I am a private, insignificant person. For in grave matters you should not look to the author, but to the argument. And you should not do as we hear that the Pythagoreans did: if they had made a statement during a disputation and were asked why it was so, they used to reply: "He said so." "He" was Pythagoras. For I should be heard not because of my authority, but because of my reasoning. I do believe that I shall not be saying anything contrary to reason. Therefore, even if you may not wish to hear something that is to your advantage, still please allow me to bring forward my thoughts on the matter and let them provide an opportunity for everybody to join the discussion. But my whole contribution I leave to your judgment and submit for your consideration: if what I say is good and true, then please accept it; and if it is bad and false, then reject it all.

Appendix B: Introduction to the speech as given in the manuscript Milano / Biblioteca Ambrosiana / M. 44 Sup

Aeneae Sylvii Piccolominei Oratio ad Patres Concilii Basiliensis¹⁰⁹⁶

{102r} [92] Etsi numquam ante, patres reverendissimi, vestra me contio loquentem audiverit, nihil est tamen quod petitiunculae meae negetis assensum. Rebus namque feliciter succedentibus vana penitus erat oratio. Nunc vero cum translationem concilii Graecorumque reductionem in medium video revolutans variasque diverse trahentes aspicio voluntates, maxime timeo, ne discordia vestra magnum aliquod pariat malum. Nec enim ab Latinis solum Graeci secessere, sed cum vestro etiam concilio papa dissentit, et, quod magis abhominor, concilium inter se divisum cerno, quae sane divisio non aliunde procedat quam ex loci nominatione, quod patriae quisque suae nimis afficitur privatisque magis commodis quam publicae studet utilitati. Ob quam rem nihil modo magis vellem quam animos omnium in consulendo liberos fore neque delicto neque libidini obnoxios, ut sine cunctatione locum eligeretis, qui vobis usui ac securitati foret. Sicque ordinaretis in orientali ecclesiae conventiones sine periculo occidentalis servare liceret. In qua re dum saepius ipse considero dumque sententias nonnullorum mecum ipse reputo ex usu fore putavi si qua ego circa rem scribens diuturnum tandem silentium interrumperem subtilique indagatione locum invenirem, qui tutior ac melior esset ad quem cuncti sine controversia deberetis accedere. Scripsi ergo circa materiam electionis loci quantum mihi **{102v}** visum est oportere. Quare, si placet sive consonum est ea audire, quae commoda vestra concernunt, sinite ut haec mea scripta legantur in medium, quae melius unicuique deliberandi praebeant facultatem.¹⁰⁹⁷

¹⁰⁹⁶ In another, later hand

¹⁰⁹⁷ Here follows a clear separation of the introduction from the main text introduced by Audi

Oration of Enea Silvio Piccolomini to the fathers of the Council of Basle

[92] Though this assembly has not heard me speak before, Most Reverend Fathers, you should not refuse to hear my little address. For when things were going well, my oration would have been superfluous. But seeing that the transfer of the Council and reunion with the Greeks are now under discussion, and noting that various interests¹⁰⁹⁸ are pulling you in different directions, I greatly fear that your disagreement will cause some great evil. For not only have the Greeks withdrawn¹⁰⁹⁹, placed the Pope is in open conflict with the Council, and - what I greatly abhor – the Council is divided internally. This conflict is caused by the selection of the future venue of the Council, since everyone is too focused on his own country and more concerned by personal advantages than the common good.

Therefore, I desire nothing more than that, in this deliberation, all minds should be free and not influenced by sin or passion so that you may, without hesitation, choose a location that will advantageous and safe for you, and thus make it possible for you to come to an agreement concerning the Eastern Church that is not detrimental to the Western. I often think on this matter and, reflecting on the judgments of many others, I considered that it would be useful if I should write on this matter and, breaking my long silence, through careful examination determine a place that is safer and better and where you may all go without discord. I have therefore written about the matter of choosing a venue, as much as it has seemed needful to me. Therefore, if it pleases you and is agreeable to hear what is to your own advantage, then allow me to read to you what I have written and which may provide everybody with a better basis for discussion.

¹⁰⁹⁸ "voluntates"

¹⁰⁹⁹ from union with the Latin Church

